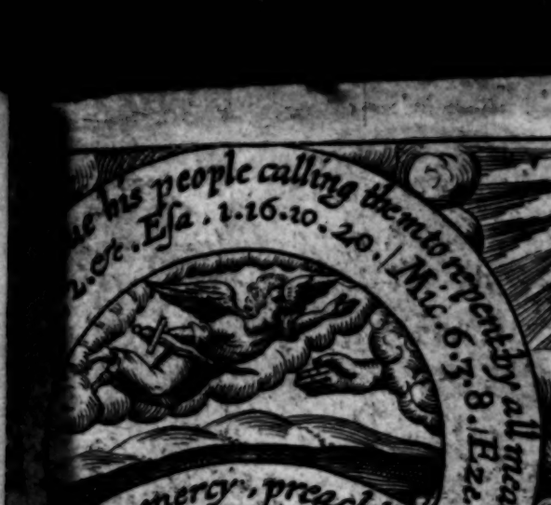
יהוה

The third part of The True-watch or The Call of ỹ Lord to awake all sorts to meete him speedily with intreaty of peace, & to turne vnto him by true repentance: shewing what causes we haue forthwith to betake o'selus to watching & prayer.

Taken out of ye vision of Ezekiel Chap: 9.

By Io: Brinsley.

The second edition.



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The ſumme of the whole Booke.

1. How the Lord did long forewarne his people of Iudah, calling them to repentance, ſundrie waies, before he brought upon them the ſeventie yeeres captivitie in Babylon. And withall the principall abominations which provoked him to this heavie judgement.

2. The wofull miſeries which all ſorts endured in that Captivitie, when no warnings would prevaile to bring them to unfained repentance: and more ſpecially the plagues which came upon the wicked and impenitent.

3. Particular application hereof unto our ſelves, and of the manifold forewarnings which we have received, chiefly from Babylon, above all in the powder-treaſon: ſhewing evidently that the Lord is angrie with us for our ſinnes, and what uſe we are to make, as of all our forewarnings, ſo chiefly of that Powder-treaſon.

4. How to appeaſe the Lord, ſo as to prevent the like judgements and all other plagues; and ever to remaine a moſt happie people unto the comming of Ieſus Chriſt. Alſo how every one of us may attaine to true Chriſtian boldneſſe to be alwaies readie to appeare before his Majeſtie.

See the more particular Contents of the ſeverall Chapters and heads after.

IER. 36. 2. *Take thee a roule of a booke and write therein all the words that I have ſpoken unto thee againſt Iſrael, and againſt Iudah, and againſt all the Nations, from the day I ſpake unto thee, from the daies of* Ioſiah *even unto this day.*

VERSE 7. *It may be they will preſent their ſupplication before the Lord, and will returne every one from his evill way, for great is the anger and the furie that the Lord hath pronounced againſt this people.*

HABAK. 2. 2. *Write the viſion and make it plaine upon tables, that he may runne that readeth it.*

VERSE 3. *For the viſion is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it ſhall ſpeake, and not lye: though it tarrie, wait for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry.*

ZEPH. 3. 6. *I have cut off the Nations; their towers are deſolate, I made their ſtreets waſte, that none paſſeth by: their cities are deſtroied, ſo that there is no man, that there is none inhabitant.*

VERSE 7. *I ſaid, Surely thou wilt feare me: thou wilt receive inſtruction: ſo their dwelling ſhould not be cut off, howſoever I puniſhed them.*

EZEK. 18. 30. **Repent and turne your ſelves from all your tranſgreſſions: ſo iniquitie ſhall not be your ruine.* * Returne and cauſe others to returne away from all, &c.

VERSE 32. *For I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth, ſaith the Lord God: Wherefore turne * your ſelves and live you.* * Or others.

A Commendatorie Epiſtle.

THis Author (Chriſtian Reader) having deſired firſt my cenſure, now ſundry yeeres agoe, and ſince my joint teſtimonie, touching this worke, that by the mouth of two or three witneſſes, God might make it more effectuall, for accompliſhing all the good his heart deſireth; I could no way juſtly denie the ſame: ſeeing as the ends, which it propoundeth and wholly aimeth at, are only to helpe to further the way to our unfained repentance, for the generall happineſſe of us all, yea even of every ſoule; and that our glory may be continued to us, and to our poſteritie; ſo he hath long travelled in the ſame, and uſed all holy meanes of triall and examination, that there might be nothing in it, but that which is neceſſary to theſe ends, and which might ſtand before the Lords Tribunall. For the Author himſelfe, though I have knowne him from my childhood, being borne neere unto him, brought up in the ſame Grammar Schoole, and after, in the ſame Colledge in *Cambridge*, and ever ſince beene moſt familiarly acquainted with him, and therefore could ſpeake more in this caſe than I take to be convenient, yet I may wholly ſpare that paines; ſeeing his owne faithfull and happy labours have ſo long agoe commended him, and made him & his holy affection for the good of all, ſo well knowne to the Church of God. As firſt, the firſt part of this *True Watch, the Rule of Life*, ſo much approved of all religious Chriſtians, to whoſe hands it hath come, that it hath now the ninth time ſeene the Preſſe, and gone thorow the triall: * Wherein he hath ſet out to the

* See the Preface before it to the Chriſtian Reader.

view of all, the holineſſe and integritie of that way of life, which we all jointly profeſſe (according to Gods ſacred word, and the good Lawes of our Chriſtian Commonweale) to the juſtifying of our Church againſt the Separatiſts, to be the true Church of Ieſus Chriſt, and that whoſoever ſo walketh ſhal undoubtedly finde eternall life, and in the meane while all heavenly boldneſſe, peace and joy. And not only againſt them, but alſo againſt the ſuperſtitious and clamorous Papiſts, who herein ſlander our Religion, affirming it to be a religion of carnall libertie, theirs of holineſſe, ours full of diviſions and uncertaintie, theirs of perfect unitie, thereby to draw our people to a diſlike of the eternall truth of our bleſſed God, and to a liking of that popiſh way, which is nothing but meere ſuperſtition in outward ſhewes of devotion, according to mens inventions, and ſuch as God never commanded, or required; nay ſuch as God hath moſt expreſly forbidden, as tending to utter perdition, both of ſoules and bodies. So ſecondly, the ſecond part of this *True Watch, the Rule of Praier*, in which he hath manifeſted his holy deſire and unfained love to the Church of God and his native Country, for a perfect peace and unitie, with all happineſſe in the ſame, and hath ſo laboured to trace out the moſt ſure and plaine way, following the direction of our bleſſed Saviour, as that whoſoever ſtriveth ſo to watch & pray, ſhall undoubtedly be amongſt them that are as the Chariots and horſmen of Iſrael, and helpe to ſave the Iland. And in the third place in his Schoole labours, for the benefit of our children and poſteritie, he hath fully witneſſed his longing deſire of the perpetuall flouriſhing of this our Church and Nation; concerning which travell, (to omit all other) [a] that one teſtimonie of the learned Doctor *Hall*, that worthie Deane of Worceſter, in his Commendatorie Preface before his booke,

[a] Dr. Hals *Commendatorie Preface. The Ieſuites have won much of their reputation, and ſtollen many hearts with their diligence: in this kinde we may outſtrip them if we want not to our ſelves. Behold heere, not feet, but wings offered to us; neither are theſe directions of meere ſpeculation, but ſuch as for the moſt part, to the knowledge of my ſelfe, and many abler judges, have beene and are daily anſwered in his experience and practiſe, with more than uſuall ſucceſſe. What remaines therefore, but that the thankfull acceptation of men, and his effectuall labours ſhould mutually reflect upon each other, that he may be encouraged by the one, and they by the other benefited, &c.*

booke, called *Ludus Literarius*, or the Grammar Schoole, dedicated to Prince *Henrie* and Duke *Charles*, (ſpeaking out of his owne experience and of ſundry other learned many yeeres agoe) may fully ſuffice. And much more now of late, that more than ordinare witneſſe by that learned [b] Mr. *Butlour* of *Oxford* in his fourth Edition of his Rhetoricke, who in ſtead of the commendations of many other of principall note, which eſpecially in *Oxford* are wont to be prefixed before any worke of ſpeciall worth as that is; taketh only the teſtimonie of this Author, in a place or two in his Grammar-Schoole, and ſets it before his booke, in ſtead of many; there commending him for that worke, as having by it deſerved worthily of all good learning. Therefore ſeeing in all his labours his good affection towards the Church of God, our dread Soveraign, with all his royall Progenie and dominions doth cleerely appeare, ſeeking only the wealth of all, and to unite all hearts, as unto the Lord of heaven, ſo to our Soveraigne Lord and King, and to his royall ſeed for our happineſſe for ever, with what thankfull acceptation are all his labours to be received? And this above all the former, wherein he now only ſtrives to helpe to awaken us out of our deepeſt ſecuritie, in the midſt of our extremeſt perill, and neceſſitie; and when the times call us to watch and pray, yea to faſt and pray, if ever heretofore. Firſt I ſay to riſe up and watch, that we may pray. To pray for the diſtreſſed ſtate of all the poore Churches, and our brethren abroad, who mourne and wring their hands by reaſon of their ſlaveries, butcheries, manifold feares and miſeries, both of their ſoules and bodies: above all for them of Bohemia and the Palatinate, the very chiefe of them a principall part of our ſelves; and withall for our brethren of France now in great tribulation for the profeſſion

[b] *The Preface of* Mr. Butlours *Rhetoricke, by* I.M. *to the Reader.*
Si in Authoris operiſve laudē (ſtudioſe lector) multorum hîc, pro more, ſuffragia requiras; inſtar multorum ſit hoc unum literati illius, & ob exquiſitam docendi methodum, de bonis literis optimè meriti, magiſtri *Iohannis Brinſlei:* cujus in ſuo Ludo literario, *or the Grammar Schoole*, cap. 16. hæc ſunt verba, &c.

feſſion of Chriſts Goſpell ; taking their caſe to heart as feeling members, little knowing how ſoone it may be our owne, and ever fearing that terrible curſe from the
Ier.5.23. Angell of the Lord ; Curſe ye Meroz (ſaid the Angell) curſe the inhabitants thereof, becauſe they came not out to helpe the Lord againſt the mightie. Secondly, to watch and pray, yea to mourne and crie for the fearfull viols of the Lords wrath (in all likelihood) ſo neerely ready to be powred downe upon our owne heads, unleſſe we ſpeedily meet the Lord in unfained repentance. If in the yeere 88. all ſorts ſo generally feared it ; when yet at our generall humiliation in faſting and praier by publike commandement, and our promiſing amendment, God heard our cries, deferred the execution of his wrath upon us ; and contrarily fought for us from heaven, arming the windes and waters for his Church amongſt us, how much more may we juſtly feare it now. If then (I ſay) all joyntly confeſſed, that if God had ſo dealt with us, as he threatned, we had moſt righteouſly deſerved it, for all our hainous abominations, and for that no other means could prevaile with us ; and if in our ſeverall acknowledgements, praiers and thankſgivings upon ſundrie occaſions ſince, we have againe and againe confeſſed as much, how much more truly may we now at this preſent ? Seeing the Lord hath granted us ſince not one yeere more alone, to ſee if we would meet him truly with intreatie of peace, and unfained ſubmiſſion, but ten, yea thrice ten yeere and more, and alſo uſed all meanes to reclaime us, both by abundant fatherly corrections, and in his long patience and commiſeration given us our third moſt dreadfull admonition, at the powder treaſon, never to be forgotten, when he even plucked us out of the furnace ; and now that our ſinnes are, in ſtead of repenting, ten times more increaſed

through

through all thoſe meanes (in the judgement of all who rightly conſider of them:) how can we expect any longer mercy? What can we looke for now in that we ſee men ſo generally (chiefly moſt of our Gallants) to make but a mocke of ſinne, yea of all Gods admonitions at home and abroad, hating all true pietie, and ſcorning it under moſt odious names? Or how can we thinke truly that our land is purged of any of our abominations, but ſtands preſently guiltie of them all, having now filled up our meaſure, ſeeing we commit moſt of thoſe fearefull abominations ſo often confeſſed, with an higher hand than ever heretofore? Or how can we imagine that our land is out of danger, ſeeing many amongſt us begin to doat againe upon the bloudie Romiſh Idolatrie; and that now our enemies are ſo increaſed in Malice, Pride, and Multitude, and ſo many of the infernall Locuſts feared to be in the midſt amongſt us. My deſire therefore is, that as this labour hath beene undertaken for the ſaving of us all, from ſuch a vengeance, as upon theſe grounds we have juſt cauſe to feare, and for our perpetuall happineſſe, and muſt needs for that cauſe concerne us all, that every one would take notice of it, & conſider ſeriouſly of every point, as God gives him opportunitie; eſpecially they who have leiſure (and ſpend many houres, yea many daies and yeeres, either wickedly or at leaſt vainly, which will bring them nothing bur ſorrow in the end) to helpe hereby to turne away the wrath, or at leaſt to ſave their owne ſoules. The worke is large (I grant) but too large thou canſt not thinke it, ſeeing the Author of it deſireth to make all plaine to the capacitie of the ſimpleſt, and truly to awake every ſoule, and for that I know not of any point in it which doth not directly tend hereunto, or can well be made ſhorter without hurt to the whole; chiefly

the

the generall good conſidered ; that every ſinner that repents not, turning from his evill way, muſt die. And therefore doubtleſſe no man ſhall have juſt cauſe to repent him of his labour ſpent in hearing or reading of it, but if God give him an heart by the right applying of it to helpe to appeaſe the wrath, or at leaſt to turne, and to ſeeke to cauſe others to turne, he ſhall have cauſe to bleſſe the God of heaven for it ; which that every one may doe, and that we may all inſtantly ſet our ſelves to ſeeke his face and favour, I humbly intreat his heavenly Majeſtie to grant, and reſt

Thine in Chriſt Ieſus,

Edward Elton *B. in D. and Paſtor of S.* Mary Magdalens *Barmondſey neere London.*

TO ALL ESTATES AND DEGREES, VVHO truly tender their owne Soules, the Church of God, and their native Countrey.

IT is now many yeares (Christian Reader) since by reading those holy Prophets which lived next before the Captivitie of Iudah, who denounced the same to be ready to come upon Gods people for their sinnes, and by considering and comparing the same with the times wherein wee live, I have ever feared the like plague, or a heavier, to be hanging over this our sinfull Nation. Neither have I feared without iust cause: for how neere indeed such a iudgement hath beene unto us, and how the same threatnings have been ready to be verified upon us, the world is witnesse, even all they who have but onely heard the report of our dangers, and of our wonderfull and even miraculous deliverances. And ever the latter perils and preservations have been the more wonderful; as that one of the Powder furnace was above all that ever former age heard of. In the due meditation and regard where-

Occasion of this watch, feare of Gods judgements hying upon us.

This feare hath not been without just cause, as events have declared.

Our latter dangers and deliverances still the greatest.

The duty of all Gods faithfull Ministers to be ever giving warning.
Ezek. 3. 17, 18. & 18. 30.
Lam. 2. 14.
Jerem 23. 22.
Iam. 4. 17. & 5. 19, 20.
2. Cor. 5. 9, 10, 11

of, I have taken it to be my dutie, and of all the faithfull Ministers of Christ, to follow the example of Noah, *and of all those faithfull Prophets, in giving warning afore-hand, (keeping within the limits and compasse of our calling) to helpe to open the eies of all, to foresee, and to cause all to tremble for the anger of the Lord, also to contend with all our power to turne every soule from his evill way: that so his wrath may be appeased, and wee delivered from the dreadfull execution of his heavieſt vengeance. Hereupon in my former feare amongst other causes I was chiefly emboldned (and that not long before the time of that bloudie Powder treason, as the Lord had so directed it) to endevour to set downe truly, and after to publiſh to all, the first part of this Watch, viz.* The rule of life, *containing the covenant which we have all entred into with our God. To the end to helpe to keepe all his people from the generall declining from that his blessed covenant to profaneneſſe and iniquitie, and from the outragious wickedneſſe of the reſt, that wee also might all learne to watch to be preserved in the evill day. And since then likewise the second part of the same Watch, viz.* The rule of prayer, *to awaken us the better, and to stirre up all the Lords faithfull servants, the more speedily and instantly to betake our selves wholly to watching and prayer, not onely to be accounted worthy to escape the evils approching, but also that each of us may still helpe to preserve the Island, like as our most compaſſionate Father hath in the riches of his mercy vouchsafed to accept us untill this day. And this likewise he in his wisedome directed to come forth at the very instant, yea in the midst of the last apparant danger, which we in our parts were in, for the insurrection about Incloſures: which howsoever it might seeme nothing, or small to them who dwelt farre from it; yet to us who expected a the approaching of the rebels every houre, and heard how the hearts of the people were generally bent, it was no leſſe*

A chiefe occasion of the first part of this Watch, as the title of it declareth.

So of the second part, The Rule of Praier, to stir us all up to watching & prayer, as our sins & dangers still increased.

The time of the comming forth of the second part.
The dreadfulneſſe of those times to many, howsoever now forgotten

terrible

terrible than any of the former, but so much more feareſull, the neerer it was. Now therefore in the third place: foraſmuch as all men may behold all kinde of wickedneſſe and impietie ſtill increaſing fearefully without hope of redreſſe, ſo that unleſſe wee will put out our owne eyes, we muſt ſee the iudgement of God haſting faſter upon us, & being at the very doore, I have taken it my bounden duty and my beſt ſervice that I could doe and poſſibly performe to his heavenly Maieſtie, his Church, and my Countrey, to adde this third part: to the end to ſet before the faces of every one of us, the hainouſneſſe of our ſinnes in every degree, and ſo the equitie of the Lords proceeding againſt us: that wee may all be inforced to iuſtifie his Maieſtie, though he come to execute whatſoever hee hath ſo often threatned, when no kinde of forewarning can doe us any good. And alſo to try if yet at length hee will vouchſafe to recall us againe to his covenant, and put new life into us, to meet him falling upon our faces in faſting and prayer, to pacifie his wrath, and that each of us may begin to put that in practiſe which was intended and ſought in the two former parts, that is, to watch and pray continually, not in words any longer, but in deed and truth, for the preſervation and laſting welfare of us and our poſteritie.

The cauſe of this third part, our ſins increaſing.

That the heavieſt iudgement muſt needs be feared to be ſo much the neerer, as the danger of the moſt High is more kindled againſt us, no man can doubt: and that his wrath is incenſed to the uttermoſt, is moſt apparent to all, whoſe eies he hath opened, or who doe but beleeve his heavenly word: for that inſtead of having any of our grievous abominations (which wee may behold ſet before our faces in the Treatiſe following, even by the Prophets themſelves, and for which hee hath ſo often threatned us,) yet unfainedly repented of, we have indeed increaſed them many times more. The covenant of our God, which the whole Land profeſſeth, and each of us in our

The heavieſt judgement juſtly feared to be hard at the doores.

All of us having solemnly entred into covenant with our God; have caused him to threaté to take away his covenant by our transgression. This confessed by all, *An.* 1588.

Baptisme have solemnly entred into, we have most grievously transgressed. And this many of us have done with so high a hand, as that we have caused that his heavenly Gospell to be blaspheмed, inforcing him to threaten to take his covenant, with all his blessings from us: yea, to leave us to bee made a prey and a spoyle unto our enemies, which thirst after our bloud continually. This all confessed, when they so despightfully and proudly came against us, as being ready to swallow us up quicke, and each of us then acknowledged, that his wrath was most iustly kindled against us for the same: so as if hee should then have cast us off utterly, for ever being his people, or a nation any more, that yet we had most righteously deserved it. This we have in like manner many a time since acknowledged, in all our dangers and plagues which wee have had upon us, plague after plague, as those ten plagues of Ægypt. More especially in the grievous dearths, and chiefly in that most poysoned plague of pestilence, as the sundry confessions of sins, then made and stil extant, doe and shall ever beare witnesse. But above all other times, when we were all ready to be consumed in the hot fierie furnace at once: yea this wee ordinarily and daily every one confessed, while we lived in imminent danger every houre, before the Lord so miraculously and graciously set up his Anointed over us. Every one then could say, Our sins are so hainous, as that we must needs have some terrible vengeance, without speedie repentance. This wrath therefore wee must needs acknowledge to be far greater now than ever heretofore: not only for that in stead of repenting, our sins are so growne up in every kinde, but also because we are now so generally, and so much further off from repentance, or any purpose of amendment, yea of so much as of any sense of our sins, or feare of any iudgement to be toward us for the same, than ever wee were in former time, notwithstanding all the means which he hath so long used to awaken us, and to bring us to repentance. How then can this

And in all our dangers *Anno* 1602. 1603.

By every one then.

Gods wrath must needes be greater now than ever before.

fire

fire of the Lords anger be ever quenched, we delivered from the violence thereof, that we ſhould not be conſumed of it, but only by ſeeking out the principall cauſes of it, to wit, our maine tranſgreſſions againſt the covenant of our God, by which he hath beene ſo provoked, and alſo by confeſſing and acknowledging them, and turning backe ioyntly to the humble obedience of that his moſt holy Covenant againe. Iſrael *cannot ſtand before their enemies, untill* Achans *ſacriledge be found out and puniſhed; neither can the dearth be ſtaied in the daies of* David, *until the cauſes of it be found out, and the Lord pacified by taking away the iniquitie. Nor yet can the ſtorme upon the Seas be quieted, ſo long as* Ionah *lieth aſleepe in his ſin. How much leſſe now, when ſo many* Achans *be in every corner, and* Ionah *aſleepe every where in the eies of all? As it is with a particular man, ſo is it with a whole nation. That like as there muſt be firſt a ſearching out of his ſin, with confeſſion of it, and turning againe unto the Lord, before his anger can be appeaſed, ſo muſt it be for a whole nation (ſo farre as wee can iuſtly conceive) before any ſound aſſurance can bee given that his wrath is turned away. This ſeemes every where moſt evident thorow all the booke of God.*

This can be no way appeaſed, but by taking away our ſins the cauſe of it, and turning againe to his Covenant. Examples. *Ioſh.* 7. 10.

2. *Sam.* 21. 1. 14. 24.

Ionah 1. 15.

As it is for a particular man, ſo for a whole Nation.

How Poperie is growne up againe, the late proclamation for preventing it, and the fury of that bloudy Religion, and for the preſervation of his royall Maieſty, and his Seed, ſet forth upon the occaſion of the cruel murther of the French King doth ſufficiently witneſſe. And likewiſe the generall urging the Oath of Allegeance inforced thereupon: beſides ſo many lamentable experiments, and our over-iuſt fears for their treacheries expected each houre. How Atheiſme alſo, with all kinde of outragious iniquitie, and ſcorning at all true pietie, doe overflow in every place, above all former times, no man can deny. Indeed ſome ſins have been odious heretofore, and eſpecially when they began firſt to ſpring up, and were cried out of, as which all the

The increaſe of Poperie and all profanenes, notorious to all.

Some ſins hainous heeretofore, now

through custome and commonnesse, become as no sinnes.

godly feared, that they would presently bring the vengeance of God upon us all, which now through long custome and commonnesse are made no sins: as that beastly valour of powring downe wine and strong drinke, and our glorying in it; pride with all monstrous excesse therein, oppression, deriding and hating all true godlines, and the power of religion. Though all of them, and many like are in a higher degree in the Land, & practised with a far higher hand now, than ever heretofore. Or if any one abomination be taken away and gone, who can say that it hath been generally repented of, or left of any conscience, or for feare of the Lord and awe of his word? And therefore if he be the same holy God, still hating sinne as much as ever hee did, and who will never cleare the guiltie, how should it be but (though our owne hearts, and all the world doe flatter us, telling us that we shall have peace, yet) as our sins are thus increased and our abhominations gone up to heaven, so his wrath and iealousie must needs smoke against us, and his curses & plagues be multiplied upon us until he hath put our name from under heaven; unlesse we meet him speedily and appease his wrath by our humble and unfained turning unto him. But these crying sinnes can never be taken away, unlesse also even the other sinnes of the Land be likewise repented of. I meane those from which these proceed, and for which men are so generally given up unto these monstrous iniquities. For these outragious enormities are the heavieſt punishments of other sinnes, and ordinarily the immediate fore-runners of the greatest temporall iudgement. Neither can wee ever have any assurance to be preserved from that extremest vengeance, untill wee returne more generally in our hearts, from all our evill wayes unto the Covenant of our God: neither yet ever repent nor turne from them, unlesse we see both generally the most hainous provocations of the Land angring his Maiestie, and each of us our owne severall sinnes particularly, with his iudgements belonging there-

No sinne truly repented of.

As our sins are multiplied, so his wrath. *Exod.*34.7. *Deut.*28.19,20.

The crying sins cannot bee taken away, unlesse the causes of them bee first repented of.

We cannot repent untill wee know both the maine provocations and each our owne sinnes, with the judgements belonging to them.

thereunto. Therefore ſith that our moſt pittifull father hath, in the riches of his endleſſe compaſſion, ordained the diſcovery of the iniquitie, and of the certaine approaching of his iudgement to turne away the vengeance, and that by turning his people from their evill way; and ſo he complaines of the Prophets, That they had not diſcovered their iniquitie to turn away their captivitie, *and ſaith plainly of them,* That if they had ſtood in his counſell, and declared his words to his people, they ſhould have turned them from their evill wayes, and from the wickedneſſe of their inventions. *I have therefore, as I ſay, taken this as my chiefeſt ſervice, that ever I could performe unto his heavenly Maieſtie, his Church and people of this our Nation, even to helpe to ſearch out our ſinne, by his holy word, and to ſet our iniquities before our faces, with his moſt righteous iudgements due unto us for the ſame, and ready ever to breake in upon us like the raging Seas, thereby to helpe amongſt others to bring us to repentance. And the rather for that, howſoever every one of us will acknowledge that we muſt firſt turne away from our ſins unto him, before hee will turne to us from his fierce wrath, and alſo that wee muſt ſearch and finde out our iniquities, and ſee the danger which we ſtand in for them, before we can turne from them; yet long experience hath confirmed this, that wee being lulled ſo faſt aſleepe in our ſecurity through our long proſperitie, can never ſearch out our ſinnes of our ſelves, unleſſe they be ſet plainly before our faces, and wee awaked and rowzed by his moſt terrible denuntiations for the ſame. If* David *himſelfe ſuch a worthy Prophet, a man of a moſt tender conſcience (as is evident by all his Pſalmes, and his watering his bed with his teares) yet being become ſecure in his ſinne, muſt have* Nathan *to awake him, by ſetting his ſinne plainly before his face, before that hee can ſee the vileneſſe of it to repent ſo of it as to finde mercie (though his ſin was ſo*

God hath ordained the diſcoverie of our iniquitie to turne away our captivitie. *Jerem.* 23. 22. And his Prophets ſtanding in his counſell to turn us from our evill way. This is the bounden dutie of all his meſſengers and their chiefe ſervice.

Becauſe we wil never ſearch out our ſinnes of our ſelves.

David muſt have *Nathan* to awaken him. 2. *Sam.* 12.

groſſe and palpable, and Gods wrath lying upon him ſo heavily in a ſpirituall manner, and alſo his vengeance ready to be executed in moſt fearefull ſort:) How much more then have we need of ſome Boanarges, *ſonnes of thunder, to awaken us, being a ſinfull and hard-hearted people and dead in our iniquities. And if thoſe to whom he hath not only ſpoken once and twice, but alſo ſmitten with ſickneſſe upon their beds; that their ſoules draw to the grave, and their life to the buriers, had need of a Meſſenger, an Interpreter one of a thouſand to declare unto them their righteouſneſſe, to ſet their ſinnes before their eyes, and where they may finde the true righteouſneſſe, before they can ſay they have ſinned, and repent, to finde mercie: How much more we our ſelves? when moſt of us who have beene chiefe in this provocation are in health and proſperitie, and in no misfortune like other folke, but rather fed in all pleaſure, as againſt the day of ſlaughter. And to conclude this point, wee ſee how thoſe three thouſand, that crucified our Lord and Saviour, could not yet ſee their bloudie ſinne, notwithſtanding all which they had formerly heard and ſeene in our Saviour, and alſo the dreadfull ſignes at his paſſion, untill that* Peter *particularly laid open their wickedneſſe, applying it unto them directly, that they were the men, and then onely are they pricked at their hearts, and crie out; Men and Brethren, what ſhall we doe? Now I ſay, if none of theſe, no not they whoſe ſinne was ſo intolerable, and who had beene ſo manifeſtly convinced, can ſearch out their ſins of themſelves, to be ſo ſoundly humbled, as to turne and ſeeke to pacifie the Lords wrath; how much leſſe hope is there of us, a Nation ſo ſetled upon our lees, and ſo hardned by our abuſing the long patience and forbearance of our moſt tender father? who having beene in ſo many dangers, and yet ſtill delivered from them all, doe thinke that it ſhall be ſo with us ever, and that now there can be no more danger toward us. We therefore had more need*

Job 33.23.

Men ſmitten with ſickneſſe drawing neere to the buriers, muſt have an interpreter one of a thouſand.

They who had crucified our Saviour.

of

of many such as Nathan, *to set our sinne most lively before our faces, and after to tell us directly, That wee are they with whom God is now angrie, and that above all the people of the earth, as he hath knowne us above all other Nations, like as we shall see in the sequell. We have need, not of that one messenger, that one of a thousand alone, but of all the faithfull messengers and men of God, by their preaching, and all holy means to shew us our unrighteousnesse: and of* Peter, *to give us to know for a suretie, That wee are the men who have crucified the Lord Iesus. Yea we have need of* Ionah, *to proclaime unto us, Yet forty daies and* England *shalbe destroyed for her sin. And finally, when preaching will not serve to awake us, we have need of* Ieremie *or* Baruch *to write the sinnes of us all, with the plagues which God hath prepared and denounced against us for the same; That every one even running by may reade them, as written in capitall letters upon tables: to trie if yet at length by this means, we may see the greatnes of the anger that is kindled against us, and so repent and returne every one from his evill way, that he may forgive our iniquitie and sinne, and deliver us from the imminent, and all like future plagues.*

We are they that have need of *Nathan* if ever any. *Amos* 3.2.

Of all Gods faithfull messengers. Of *Peter*. *Acts* 2.36. Of *Ionah*. *Ionah* 1.2.

Of *Ieremie* or *Baruch* to write our sins, when all other means faile. *Jere.*36.2,3.

To this very end, that wee may behold the Lord himselfe discovering unto us our iniquities, and so may have no more pretence nor cloakes for our sinnes, nor yet surmize the least partialitie, here we may all see (and that in the very sinnes of Iudah, *for which God brought upon them that terrible captivitie) the Lord himselfe and not men, setting before our faces both our sinnes in generall, and the transgressions of each of us, as in particular, and how we have thereby deserved such a iudgement. These I have laboured to set out more fully, and to apply them more particularly unto us, because of the degrees acknowledged by all to be necessary unto sound repentance in every one, who lookes to get full assurance of Gods mercie. As first a true search, sight and sense of sinne and Gods anger for*

We may here see our sins and judgement set before us in the sinnes of *Iudah*, by the Lord himselfe.

Theſe labored in more ſpecially, becauſe of the degrees in true repentãce.

for it. 2. *Humble confeſſion of it.* 3. *Griefe of heart with deteſtation of the ſame.* 4. *Crying for pardon.* 5. *A lowly offering our ſelves to his Maieſtie to walke with him all our dayes.* 6. *A faithfull performance of our vowes. For this cauſe have I bent my chiefe ſtudie to help ſomewhat hereunto, that all theſe parts of true repentance may be wrought in us, and the ſame made unfained. And to this end I have prepared firſt (as was ſaid) and ſent before, the Covenant of our God with us, in the firſt part of this Watch: that it might bee throughly tried, like as it hath been approved for many yeeres, by ſundry learned profeſſours of the Goſpell, even by all to whom it hath come, ſo farforth as I know, to be that truth of God, wherein wee all agree: and the ſumme of that which the Lord requires of us generally, without which we cannot be eſtabliſhed, and of every one particularly, if we will be ſaved.*

The Covenant ſent before acknowledged by the learned.

The branches of the Covenant, ſet heere before our ſins. That wee may all ſee and turne to the Covenant of the Lord.

In this part I have likewiſe ſet the ſeverall branches of the ſame Covenant before ſundry of our hainous ſinnes, that by comparing them together, wee may more lively behold our tranſgreſſions and provocations. Yea I have ſtriven thorow the whole to helpe, that every one of us might returne to that his bleſſed Covenant, for the happineſſe of us all, and of every particular ſoule, and to ſave us both from the temporall and eternall vengeance.

1. For the whole Nation.

And firſt in regard of the whole Nation, becauſe wee all ſtand continually in danger of that anger of God to be powred out upon us, which had formerly almoſt overwhelmed us all, and for ought we can imagine, muſt needs overtake us in the end, unleſſe we more generally repent, and turne unto his Maieſtie.

No policie can ſecure us, but our more generall turning.

No policie of man nor humane meanes can ever ſecure us from the furie of Babylon, and that he ſhould not ſuffer them to execute their malice upon us, and leave them to be executioners of his plagues ſo often and ſo neerely accompliſhed, but this our more generall turning.

Ierem. 18.7.

All that ever they have done or doe intend, are nothing but the

Lords

Lords threatnings, denouncing by them to plucke us up, to root us out, and destroy us; as we shall see at large in this vision of Ezechiel. *They are onely Gods axe, his souldiers, his executioners, though themselves know not so much. It is true indeed, hee may deferre his plagues, or lessen them, at the prayers of his faithfull servants, as he hath done many a day, and saved us in the imminent perils; but there is nothing (so farre as we can perceive out of the word of the Lord to give us any securitie) that can cause him to repent of that great plague and destruction, which hee seemeth to have denounced so plainly and directly from Heaven against our Realme and Nation, so to turne it away, but onely our turning from our wickednesse. Wee may all behold our present estate in the* 18. *of* Ieremy, *written as in great letters for every one to reade, and that so plainly as none can pretend ignorance, but it must of necessitie convince every conscience in all the Land; for to us it is directed, both to us all in generall, and to every soule particularly. At the* 5th *verse of that Chapter, first he sends* Ieremy *to the Potters house, that there hee might see the Potter breake the pots in his hand at his pleasure. Then the word came unto the Prophet at that very instant, saying,*

"*O house of Israel, cannot I doe with you, as this Potter,*
"*saith the Lord? Behold, as the clay is in the Potters hand, so*
"*are yee in my hand, oh house of Israel. And after hee addes*
"*these words, verse* 7. *I will speake suddenly against a nation*
"*to plucke it up, and to root it out, and destroy it. verse* 8. *But*
"*if this Nation against whom I have pronounced, turne from*
"*their wickednes, I will repent of the plague which I thought*
"*to bring upon them. ver.* 9. *And I will speak suddenly concer-*
"*ning a Nation and concerning a Kingdome, to build it up, and*
"*to plant it. ver.* 10. *But if it do evill in my sight, & heare not*
"*my voice, I wil repent of the good which I thought to doe for*
"*them. ver.* 11. *Speake now therefore unto the men of Iudah,*
"*and*

All their malice and mischievous devices, are the Lords denunciations against us. *Isai.* 10.6,15.

From which nothing can cause him to turne, but our turning to him. *Ierem.* 18.5.

verse 5.

" *and to the Inhabitants of Ieruſalem, ſaying, Thus ſaith the*
" *Lord, Behold, I prepare a plague for you, and purpoſe a thing*
" *againſt you. Returne now therefore every one from his evill*
" *way, and make your waies and your workes good.*

Application. Our deſtruction ſhewed and accompliſhed in effect. Our deliverance as a new creation.

To apply this to our ſelves: Did not the Lord ſhew this unto us much more viſibly than he did unto Ieremie; *That wee were all as the clay in his hand, that he had not onely power to daſh us in peeces, but had in effect done it already; ſave that he did (as it were) create and forme us againe of ſuch a ſudden, that wee did all wonder at it; and all Nations ſhall have cauſe to wonder to the end of the world.*

How many waies, yea how ſenſibly & ſuddenly God hath ſpoken unto us may appeare in this whole worke.

How many wayes, yea how ſenſibly and ſuddenly God hath ſpoken unto us all, (both proclaiming by moſt infallible tokens, that his anger is kindled againſt us to the uttermoſt, and that he is ready to powre out upon us the ful viols of his vengeance; and alſo on the other ſide declaring in all his long forbearance and admirable deliverances, how unwilling hee is to proceed to the execution, if any other meanes might reclaime us) will evidently appeare to every one, who with any conſcience or due conſideration ſhall reade that which followeth in this viſion. And for that other maine point, That nothing elſe can truly ſecure us from the execution, ſo as to give us true comfort, but our turning to the Lords Covenant; aske of all the Booke of God, of all the places containing promiſes and threatnings to whole Nations; whether all the promiſes be not made unto our turning and obedient walking in his Covenant: and all the threatnings after this manner; That if wee walke more ſtubbornly againſt him, he will increaſe his vengeance accordingly, and plague us yet ſeven times more. So that all holy means are to be uſed to helpe to recall us to the true obedience of that his holy Covenant, that each may renew the oath of our obedience to Ieſus Chriſt, for the happineſſe of the whole and of everie ſoule. For God will have us all to know,

Nothing can ſecure us ſo as to give us comfort, but turning to the Lords Covenant.

Levit. 26. 3. 23, 24.

That all holy meanes are to be uſed thereto

That

That whatsoever soule will not returne to his Covenant must die; it must die eternally. Yea though we live not in a wilfull reiecting of all the Covenant, but in any one abomination wittingly contrary to the same; and much more doing it presumptuously, that is, both wittingly and willingly, being warned and convinced thereof, as the word is most direct. Yea if we doe not turne, and seeke to cause others to turne, chiefly all those committed to our charge, we must die. Only that man is a iust man, who doth iustice, and endeuours to walke in all Gods statutes, and to deale truly, turning and seeking to cause others to turne, that man onely shall liue. Never any soule shall have any assurance to escape Gods vengeance, or have true boldnesse to appeare before the Lord, but onely such a man. Aske of the holy Scriptures, whether this be not the tenor of them all: whether any other be a liuing member of Christ, or have any part in his bloud, or in that redemption wrought by him.

Every soule who will not returne must die. *Ezech.* 18. 10. 11

Yea all who seeke not to cause others to turne. *Iam.* 2. 10. *Galat.* 2. 10. *Num.* 15. 30, 31. *Hebr.* 12. 14. *Ezech.* 18. 30. *Ezech.* 18. 9. Who it is who God accounts a iust man, which shal liue.

But above all, this is yet more dreadfull, that whosoever they be, that liue in a wilfull breach of any part of the Covenant of God, and chiefly those who wallow in any one of those abominations which brought this captivitie of Iudah, doe not onely destroy their owne soules, without unfained repentance, but also doe helpe (so much as one mans sinne can doe) to draw downe the vengeance of God upon the whole Land, to the ruinating both of Church and Common-wealth that bred them. Every of our blasphemers, drunkards, whoremongers, Idolaters, profane Sabaoth-breakers, despisers of the word of the Lord, *with all other notorious sinners, have their hands therein. Therefore the Lord from heaven speakes unto us all, and cries loud unto us to turne unto him, that wee may escape his vengeance. He hath here in this vision set such a glasse before our faces, as wherin we may behold our selves most lively, both our present and future estate, what he threatneth to doe unto us. Oh thou the Vineyard of the Lord, he shewes unto thee,*

All obstinate sinners help to draw downe vengeance upon the whole land, beside the destroying of their owne soules.

The Lord frō heaven cries to us all to turne, speaking,

1. To his vineyard.

thee, that for thy unfruitfulneſſe he is about to make thee waſte! You who are the fruitleſſe branches behold your condition, either you muſt bring forth fruit ſpeedily, or elſe be cut downe and throwne into the everlaſting fire. You who draw neere unto God with your lips in an outward profeſſion, but your hearts are ſo far from him, that by your lives you give occaſion to his enemies to blaſpheme his name; hee ſhewes you here the iudgement that hee hath prepared for you. Open your eyes, you cruell oppreſſors, you that flea the poore and needie, and behold here what the Lord is providing for you, and what a deſtruction you are pulling upon your owne heads. You who ſpend all your time in pride, belly-cheere, and all exceſſe of riot, with abundance of idleneſſe, never regarding to ſtrengthen the hands of the poore and needie, but ſtill to weaken them by plucking from them violently, ſee whether you are ruſhing forward, bethinke your ſelves before it be too late. You who caſt away the word of the Lord, ſcorning and hating to be reformed by it, here the Lord forewarnes you what hee is bringing upon you. You that pollute his Sabbaths after the manner of the Gentiles, to you hee himſelfe ſpeakes, that if you will not obſerve his reſt, he will make the Land to reſt when it lieth deſolate, and no man to paſſe thorow it. Or that at the leaſt your ſelves ſhall be thruſt forth from his eternall reſt into the place of horrour and crying, where you ſhall never have reſt day nor night.

2. To all drawing neere to God with lips alone.

3. To oppreſſors.

4. To all given up to all exceſſe in pride and belly-cheere.

5. All caſting away the word of the Lord.

6. Polluters of the Sabbaths.

Levit. 26. 34.

All you who are outragious in your courſes, and make the evill faſhions of all Countries about you, even of the enemies of Chriſts Goſpell and murtherers of his Saints, to be your glory, you may here behold how you call in continually theſe wicked enemies to avenge the Lords quarrell, and to be the executioners of his moſt righteous iudgements upon you. Oh you that are turning backe or haſtning apace to the vile Idolatrie of former daies, which ſometimes very children abhorred in ſeeing the

7. Outragious in their courſes & evil faſhions

8 All turning backe to the Idolatry of former times.

the abomination of it: and all you who would ſo faine be in Babel againe, you may here take a view of the terrible vengeance of God upon your ſelves in ſuch extreme blindneſſe, and how you are drawing in the bloudy Babylonian upon your ſelves, and poſteritie, and even the whole Land, ſo far as you are able, with as ill or a worſe captivitie than ever came upon Iudah; which how neerely you had effected, your owne hearts are witneſſes. Here you may ſee how that one day alone of Babels crueltie, one of their powder furnace daies, ſhall be enough for you, at leaſt when you ſhall wiſh to ſtand afarre off for feare of her torment: whereof you are ſure to have your parts, if you will needes be partakers of her ſinnes. And you that by your intolerable profaneneſſe and Atheiſme doe ſeeme after a ſort to challenge the Lord to his face, to dare him, if hee be a God, to ſhew himſelfe, and to haſten his vengeance, and ſo make your ſelves merry with ſcoffing at all who feare his name, you may in this heare the Lord himſelfe telling you, as from heaven, that you are the men, for whoſe cauſe he cannot ſpare, for whom he can have no more pittie, and that hee will make you eſpecially to feele whether he be a God, a iuſt and terrible God or no. Here finally we may all ſee the Lord himſelfe ſetting before us both our generall and particular eſtate, with the meanes which he hath uſed to reclaime and ſpare us, the terrour of his anger and plagues when no other means will ſerve. And laſtly, the way how yet we may be delivered, and not only be ſet free out of the danger, but alſo remaine a glorious Nation untill his ſecond comming, and how every one may eſcape his vengeance.

9. All challenging the Lord by their profaneneſſe and Atheiſme.

All of us may ſee the Lord ſetting before us the meanes which he uſed to reclaime us and ſpare us. And how yet we may eſcape.

Thorowout have I ſtriven to ſhew my love and earneſt deſire, not onely to the whole, but alſo to ſave every ſoule from theſe plagues. Yet have I not endevoured any more herein than the Angell for Lot *in labouring to pull us out of the deſtruction remaining for the impenitent; nor any more than*

Here is no more but an endevour to ſave all.

Eſay,

Esay, Ieremie, Ezechiel, *with other the Prophets and faithfull men of* Iudah, *did before the Captivitie, in seeking to turne away that calamitie and all other their miseries from them; nor going past the bounds of the word of the Lord delivered by those Prophets: Nor yet any more at all, than I take to be the dutie of every faithfull Minister and Man of God, so farre as the Lord shall offer him opportunitie, to seeke to preserve all from Gods wrath, and to plucke every soule out of the fire of his vengeance. And this by shewing all sorts their sinnes, to bring them to repentance thereby, by haling and drawing to get every* Lot *out of* Sodom, *before the destruction come.*

Within the bounds of the word, & within the compasse of the calling of every Man of God, as God offreth opportunity and holy meanes. *Ezek.* 18. 30, 32.

If any one shall be offended for the discoverie of his sinne amongst the generall, without the knowledge and sight whereof hee cannot be saved, and that onely because hee would still live in it, or would not be awaked, his displeasure therein is no more to be regarded, than of one in an heavy sleepe, in the midst of an house all on fire about him, now readie to fall upon his head, to burne him to ashes. Whom God shall enable to pull forth any such, when he shall awake them and cause them to see their danger wherein they were, and their gracious deliverance, then will they magnifie his great name, that those did so adventure themselves for them, and esteeme such above all other of the earth. And as for the displeasure of men, better is it ten thousand times to have all the world offended with us, for our labouring in love and dutie in our place, to save and pull men from under Gods wrath, and forth of the very pit of hell, so much as he shall vouchsafe us mercie, than to have the Lord angrie with us, for being unfaithfull in that which hath beene committed unto us, and for neglecting to save his people from destruction. Oh what extreme foolishnesse is it to feare man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and whose heart is in the Lords hand, to turne as the boats in the waters,

The offending of them who are asleepe in the midst of this perill not to be regarded.

They plucked forth will magnifie God for us.

Better to have all men offended with us, than the Lord.

Foolishnesse to feare men.

and

and to incline as pleaseth him, who cannot move a finger at us but by his permission, nor do any more than he wil turne to our good; and not to feare him, who if he be angry with us never so little, all our daies are gone! Who would have killed Moses *for omitting the circumcising of his childe; who brought the tempest on the sea, and would not suffer it to cease, untill that* Ionah *was throwne into it, because hee provided for his owne peace, with neglect, or at least through feare of performance of that dutie enioyned him, which was to goe to* Ninive, *to preach unto them, That within fortie daies* Ninive *should bee destroyed. Who finally threatneth* Ieremie *to destroy him, before the people, if hee feare their faces: and will certainly whip his deareſt servants unto his worke, if they begin to loyter. Wee therefore, who are Gods messengers, had neede to looke unto it, to endevour so far as we may, keeping within our limits, to pull all sorts of sinners with violence out of the fire; and to strive to set their sinnes before their faces in their native colours. And the rather that so all of us seeing the hainousnesse of our owne sinnes, and of the sinnes of our Land, may come to some more due consideration of the infinitenesse of Gods mercy in sparing us so long, and may be enforced to iustifie him in all his former threatnings and iudgements. Yea, if he should yet punish us seven times more, by pestilence, famine, sword, and even captivity it selfe; to make us slaves to our enemies, untill we know the happinesse of his service, by the misery of the service of his enemies: like as he denounceth in his Law. Lastly, to the end that wee all may see that there is iust cause for us to feare, that wee shall at length provoke the Lord to the most terrible execution of his threatnings, unlesse he should be thought to have forgotten the earth, and his owne iustice also.*

Not to regard the horrour of Gods anger, on *Moses, Exo.4.24*

Ionah 1.13.

Threatned against *Ieremie* 1.17.

Therefore Gods messengers had need to looke to themselves, to help to save all. To cause all to see his mercie in sparing us.

To justifie him in his threats & judgements.

And know that he must needes proceed at length to execution.

If any private man shall heare of an imminent danger to his Prince or Countrey, hee is worthily taken and accounted as a traytor,

Private men foreseeing dangers to give warning.

traitor, if he doe not what he can to discover and also prevent the same forthwith, and that by shewing all the meanes, which he knoweth, how it may be avoided: How much more then are all such so to be adiudged, whom the Lord hath appointed his publique watchmen to save his people from destruction, if they be unfaithfull therein. Happy shall they be, whom the Lord shall vouchsafe to be helpers any way to pacifie the wrath, and to turne away the plagues, and withall to continue and increase the true peace and felicitie of his chosen flocke and of their native countrey, besides their owne portion which themselves shall have therein. Happy hee who shall plucke but one soule from the infernall pit: our reward is with him who seeth all our labour, and regardeth the uprightnesse of our hearts, accepteth our willingnesse, and who will one day reward us openly.

Much more Gods publique watchmen.

Happy they who may help to turne away Gods vengeance.

Happy he that saveth but one soule. Isai. 49.14.

If any man thinke the worke over-long and tedious (besides that it is a large exposition of the whole Chapter of Ezech. 9. and a handling of sundry points in it necessarie for this purpose of furthering our repentance, and withall a plaine demonstration of the principall sinnes of Iudah, which brought the captivitie, with her warnings and plagues; and all to the end we may fully therein see our owne estate, so to be admonished) let him consider the unfained desire that is in it, to awake us from our danger; or at the least to cause Gods faithfull servants, to lay all the more to heart, and to omit nothing in the discoverie of our iniquitie and danger, or which may concerne the meanes of our preservation and happinesse, so farre as it hath pleased his goodnesse to make knowne unto his servant. Let him know how wee are become for most part, as they of Iudah before the Captivitie: To whom line must be upon line, precept upon precept, speaking most plainely as unto children, or else we learne nothing. Nothing which we truly lay to heart to move us to repentance, and to doe the same.

Why the worke is long.

The word must be unto us line upon line, else we will not understand to repent.

Though

Though otherwiſe many of us be of much underſtanding and wiſdome, as many amongſt them were, and as they generally thought themſelves. Can any man thinke that any of our notorious ſinners, be they never ſo great ſchollers in other learning, as our ſcorners, deſpiſers, blaſphemers, Sabbath-breakers, drunkards, uncleane perſons, or the like, living without repentance, have any ſound true ſaving knowledge at all of God? Can wee imagine they have ſo much ſound and ſanctified underſtanding, as our very young children; who know even from their infancie, that theſe are ſuch ſinnes, as doe grievouſly provoke the Lord to anger, and being ſo generally committed, and with ſo high a hand, muſt needs in time bring his plagues upon us all, without our unfained repentance and reformation thereof? Happy were thoſe men, if they but knew, that they all ſtand in ſtate of condemnation, and muſt undoubtedly be damned, unleſſe they repent and turne before Gods wrath come upon them, which every childe can tell them! Happy were they, had they but the knowledge of this one ſentence, which the Lord hath denounced, That ſeeing they now deſpiſe his counſell, and will none of his correction, he will laugh at their deſtruction, when it commeth ſuddenly upon them as a whirle-winde, and they ſhall not eſcape. That they ſhall then have iudgement without mercie. So that I cannot, as I conceive, be too plaine with theſe men, if I may cauſe but ſome of them to underſtand aright, and to practiſe accordingly. If the ſhort and pithie writings of the great learned had prevailed hereunto, this labour and many others might have beene ſpared; but we growing much worſe, as if in truth we did not underſtand them, I take and hold it to be neceſſarie ſtill to trie further all holy meanes: we know not which the Lord will bleſſe. Surely for the greateſt part, the moſt plaine is the moſt profitable.

Notorious ſinners have no true underſtanding, bee they never ſo great ſchollers.

Prov. 1.25,26, 27.

Iam. 2.13.

Eccleſ. 11.1.

But if it ſhall be obiected, that the applications to the particu-

The applications so plaine to drive us unto Christ. *Acts* 2. 36. 37. *Numb.* 21. 9. *Iohn* 3. 14, 15.

particular kindes of sinnes and sinners are over plaine, and come too neere the quicke. I answer againe, Blessed man is hee who can finde them to come neere to his owne corruption and sinne. Is not this the onely way to drive us to behold the true Brasen Serpent, when wee feele our selves stung at our hearts? Can ever any wretched sinner crie out, Men and Brethren, what shall I doe, that I may be saved, untill hee have his soule thus pierced? Or, can any fornicator, adulterer, blasphemer, or any other notorious sinner, finde the soveraigne comfort which is in Christs bloud, but onely such a one? Yet this I say unto every soule, that if any thing doe seeme to pierce, which is not the word of the Lord, or is any way misapplied, that it is not any more to be feared than darts of stubble. But so farre as it is his blessed word, or following necessarily out of the same, it will one day certainly wound us, and better here, whilest wee may have our wounds cured againe, by applying that soveraigne remedie of the bloud of the Sonne of God, than to be smitten thorow with it, when all hope of cure is past, and so to have our hearts galling us and vexing us eternally.

If any thing seeme to pierce which is not Gods word, or it misapplied, it is no more to bee feared than a dart of stubble.

The Authors humble desire to have this brought to the triall, and so to more perfection, as all other his labours.

I therefore here doe also humbly beg of all the worthy and faithfull servants of the Lord, as I have in my former Labours, to helpe mee to bring every peece of this Worke to the triall, for the full assurance of every soule, who is desirous to see his evill way, and would escape the day of the Lords vengeance, or who would seeke to helpe to pacifie this wrath kindled against us. If there be in it any one sentence, which is not either the word of the Lord, or not arising out of it, and agreeable thereto, that it may be reformed; or if it bewray the least partiall affection in leaning to any side, but to the Lord, and to his manifest truth agreed upon by us all, who soundly professe Christs Gospell; or the least false testimonie. Our most holy and blessed God, infinite in wisedome

and

and power, needes not our lye to bring any of his to repentance, nor for ſetting forth of his glorie. No, no, his owne word is enough, and ſhall be found abundantly ſufficient to ſave all his Elect, to deſtroy all his enemies, to deliver his Church, to get himſelfe the victorie. I dare not wittingly affirme one untruth, no, not againſt the bloudie enemie, nor againſt Satan himſelfe, no, nor yet wrong any creature under heaven: farre be it from me to give the Accuſer that advantage. How then may I doe it for the cauſe of the Lord, who abhorreth the very leaſt iniquitie, and with whom no evill can dwell?

God needs not our lie to bring his to repentance, *Job* 13. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Moreover, ſith all this wholly tendeth to helpe towards the making and eſtabliſhing our peace with our God, by ſeeking to recall us all unto his obedience, that wee may euery one renew our vow and Covenant with him, for the wealth of us and our poſteritie, I have ſtrictly kept my ſelfe within the limits of the firſt part of this Watch, which containeth the ſumme of the Covenant of our God: wherein we all agree in outward profeſſion, and unto which whoſoever returneth unfainedly to walke in the ſincere obedience of it, ſhall undoubtedly have eternall life: like as everie impenitent tranſgreſſour againſt it, is certainly condemned by the generall verdict of all the true Churches of Chriſt.

The work tendeth to the renuing of our Covenant for the happineſſe of us and of our poſteritie. Limited within the bounds of the Watch, wherein we all agree. For the breach whereof each impenitent perſon ſtands condemned by the generall verdict of all the Churches of Chriſt.

In all this worke I have and doe inſtantly deſire of the Lord, that I may be a faithfull and true witneſſe, both for his heavenly Maieſtie, and for his people; and alſo, that I may ſhew in every part, a right demonſtration of an unfained love to the Church of Chriſt, and towards my Nation, even to every ſoule, for the ſaving of each from the wrath to come; and withall that I may preſerve the honour due to all in authoritie, chiefly to the higheſt, to binde all hearts to their ſuperiours, each to others, and all of us to

The deſire of the Author to be a faithfull witneſſe.

Ieſus Chriſt, that hee may ever remaine our Captaine, Protector, King and Saviour, even he who will one day manifeſt all the ſecrets of the hearts of men, who have beene with him, and who againſt him: who will come quickly, and reward every one as their workes ſhall be.

Apac.22.20. *Amen, even ſo, come*
Lord Ieſus.

CON-

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ſeverall Chapters, particularly as they ariſe out of the Viſion,
EZECHIEL 9.

1 THe Viſion given to *Ezechiel*, with the occaſion and opening of it. *Verſe* 1.

2 Certaine directions to be obſerved in our reading hereof, to teach us to make right uſe of the Viſion to our ſelves.

3 The Lord is not wont to bring any terrible judgement on his Church, but ever before-hand to give ſome evident warning. That he never warnes without cauſe or in vaine: and what juſt matter we have for all our manifold and gratious fore-warnings, to betake our ſelves to watching and prayer. *Verſe* 1.

4 The withdrawing of the Lords glorious preſence from his Church, is both an evident ſigne of his diſpleaſure, and a manifeſt threatning of his departure: And what cauſes we have thereupon to watch and to pray to pacifie the Lord, ſo to hold him ſtill amongſt us. *Verſe* 3.

5 How the Lord is moſt unwilling to depart from his Church, ſo long as there is any other remedie; manifeſted in his oft threatning to depart before hee goe; and of the outward tokens both of his glorious preſence in his Church, *Verſe* 3.

Church, and of his departure from it: And what cauſes wee have in reſpect thereof to watch and pray continually.

Verſe 4. 6 No priviledges can doe a people any good, if they grow in their iniquitie, but the moe their mercies have beene, the greater is their ſinne, and the heavier ſhall their judgement be, when it commeth: what cauſe wee have thence to watch and to pray for the fearefull increaſe of the tranſgreſſions amongſt us.

4. 7 The marking of the mourners. That is, how Gods owne people are marked, in the midſt of the greateſt confuſions, before the deſtruction come. And ſo what cauſe every one hath to watch and to pray that hee may be ſo marked.

4. 8 The property of the godly living amongſt the wicked in a ſinfull age, is, to mourne and crie for all the abominations and tokens of Gods anger. Alſo what cauſe all Gods ſervants have to watch and pray for the fewneſſe of ſuch, and that each of us may be found of that little number.

Verſ. 2. & 5. 9 The enemies by which the Lord threatneth or afflicteth his Church, are his ſouldiers; and thereupon what cauſe we have to give our ſelves to watching and prayer, becauſe of the increaſe of them in number, pride and malice.

Verſe 5. 10 The mourners being once marked and made ſure, then comes the vengeance; for the deſtroyers follow at the heeles of the marking Angell. What need wee had therefore to watch and pray, becauſe we know not whether this worke be not alreadie accompliſhed, or how neere it is.

Verſ. 4. & 6. 11 The principall abominations for which the godly ſo mourned, and which moved the Lord to ſo ſevere a vengeance;

vengeance; first in generall, after more particularly. And therein what causes we have to watch and pray both to be kept pure from them, and to obtaine pardon and redresse of them, or at least that wee may escape the plagues due unto them.

12 The meanes which the Lord had used to bring them to repentance, that hee might spare them, and how their sinne was increased thereby. Also the cause why the meanes could doe them no good. And what neede wee have thereupon to watch and pray continually. *Verse 4.*

13 The severitie of the Lords vengeance, and the miseries which all sorts endured in that Captivitie, when no other meanes could serve to reclaime them. And thence what need we have all to watch and pray continually to turne away the like, and also to be thankfull for all our former deliverances, from as great calamities so neere unto us. *Vers. 5, 6, 7.*

14 How Gods true Messengers and all his faithfull servants are wont to be affected when they perceive the Lords anger to be kindled, and his judgements readie to rush upon his people. Also the meanes, which in this their holy affection they use, to prevent the evils, and to pacifie his Majestie. And herein likewise what cause we have to watch and pray for the want of these affections, and for the generall neglect of the state of the people, and of pacifying the Lords wrath. *Verse 8.*

15 The sinnes of a people may be so hainous, as that the Lord will not be pacified at the prayers of his deerest servants. Also when that time is, and what cause we have thereupon to watch and pray continually. *Verse 9, 10.*

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before him, and this alone when they are able to ſay, in a good conſcience, Lord I have done as thou haſt commanded me. And what great cauſe all of us have to watch and pray continually, that we may be alwaies able to ſay ſo; to have boldneſſe evermore hereby, whatſoever come to paſſe.

AN

AN ADVERTISEMENT TO THE CHRISTIAN READER.

FOR thoſe who would reade this Booke with comfort, and reape the bleſſing deſired by it, in obtaining mercie and favour from the Lord for themſelves and the whole Land, my humble requeſt is, that they would reade and weigh theſe Contents in the beginning both generall and particular; whereby they may ſee the ſumme and drift of all; and have as it were a plaine view of the whole in their heads: afterwards to reade the Prayer in the end, which is according to the ſame, that they may better conceive and make a right uſe thereof; and then to reade the whole in order, if their leiſure and opportunitie ſerve, or at leaſt ſuch parts of it, as they ſhall thinke moſt neceſſary; and eſpecially the laſt Chapter, which moſt neerely concerneth every ſoule.

soule. That considering all, as before Christs judgement seat, like as I have endevoured to doe, and so striving joyntly in faith and love for our selves and all other the poore afflicted Churches of Christ; the Lord may fulfill all our holy desires, turne away all evils from us and them, and make us to continue a flourishing Church and a happie Nation to the comming of the Lord Iesus in the clouds.

Remember, {1. *The danger we stand in, because of the Lords displeasure for our sinne.* 2. *The meanes how we may yet pacifie and prevent the same, if we be not wanting to our selves.* 3. *That we are all to be helpers hereunto.* 4. *The comfort and happinesse of the true helpers, whatsoever come to passe: with the misery of the rest.* } *are the briefe and scope of all.*

Esay 65. 24. Before they call I will answer, and whiles they are yet speaking I will heare.

Hosea 12. 4. He had power over the Angel and prevailed, he wept and praied unto him.

Zach. 4. 6. Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts, *Esay* 59. 19.

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THE

THE VISION GIVEN to EZECHIEL before the great Captivitie of IUDAH, set downe in the ninth Chapter of *Ezechiel*; with the occasion and opening thereof.

1. HE cried also in mine eares with a loud voice, saying; * Cause them that have charge over the Citie to draw neere, even everie man with his destroying weapon in his hand.

* Alias, The visitations of the Citie draw neere.

2. And behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the North, and everie man a slaughter weapon in his hand, and one man among them was clothed with linnen, with a writers inkehorne by his side, and they went in and stood beside the brazen Altar.

3. And the glorie of the God of Israel was gone up from the Cherub whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house; and he called to the man clothed with linnen, which had the writers inkehorne by his side.

4. And the Lord said unto him, Goe thorow the midst of the Citie, thorow the midst of Ierusalem, and set a marke upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that crie for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.

5. And to the others he said in my hearing, Goe ye after him thorow the Citie, and smite, let not your eye spare, neither have ye pitie.

6. Slay utterly old and young, both maids and little children and

and women, but come not neere any man upon whom is the marke, and begin at my Sanctuarie; then they began at the ancient men which were before the house.

7. *And he said unto them, Defile the house, and fill the Courts with the slaine: goe ye forth, and they went forth, and slew in the Citie.*

8. *And it came to passe, while they were slaying them, and I was left, that I fell upon my face, and cried and said, Ah Lord God, wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel in the powring out of thy furie upon Ierusalem?*

9. *Then said he unto me, The iniquitie of the house of Israel is exceeding great, and the land is full of bloud, and the Citie full of perverseneſſe: for they say, the Lord hath forsaken the earth, and the Lord seeth not.*

10. *And as for me also, mine eyes shall not spare, neither will I have pittie, but I will recompence their way upon their head.*

11. *And behold, the man clothed with linnen, which had the inkehorne by his side, reported the matter saying, I have done as thou hast commanded me.*

Chapter I.

The resolution and opening of the Chapter.

Occasion of the Vision.

The Lords using all means to spare his people.

Chiefly by his Prophets.

BEfore the last and most grievous Captivitie of Iudah and the destruction of Ierusalem by the Babylonians, the Lord used all ordinarie meanes to bring the people to repentance, that he might spare them, because he pitied them, being his owne chosen people and peculiar inheritance. Amongst other, he stirred up divers of his faithfull servants the Prophets, as *Isay, Ieremie, Micah, Zephanie, Ezechiel,* and others; some of them long before the same; others of them he continued unto the verie day, still by them fore-warning and calling them to repentance.

To

To theſe Prophets he revealed both the particular iniquities, whereby he was ſo provoked, and alſo the ſpeciall judgements and plagues which he had prepared for them, unleſſe they repented. That they might lift up their voyces as trumpets, declaring theſe things unto them; at leaſt hereby to awaken them to move them to turne and ſeeke unto him, before his wrath was wholly powred out upon them.

To whom he revealed their ſins & plagues.

To awake and bring them to repentance.

This Chapter is part of a viſion revealed to *Ezechiel* concerning the deſtruction of Ieruſalem, now hard at hand, contained in the foure Chapters together, to wit, in the 8, 9, 10, 11. And it conſiſteth of foure parts, according to the number of the Chapters. Firſt, in the 8. Chapter is ſhewed the wickedneſſe of thoſe, who ſtill remained in Ieruſalem. Secondly, In the ninth Chapter the ſlaughter and deſtruction is declared, which the Lord would bring upon all in the Citie, except thoſe which were marked. Thirdly, In the 10. Chapter is ſet downe a viſion of the fire of Gods vengeance, which was throwne upon the Citie, to conſume many of them with peſtilence and famine before the taking of the Citie, and alſo in burning both the Citie and the Temple, when the glorie of the Lord was departed from it. Fourthly, In the 11. Chapter is fore-ſhewed the moſt grievous perſecution, which ſhould follow all thoſe, who ſhould eſcape the ſword, and that fire of Gods vengeance, the peſtilence and famine, and ſo the miſeries which they ſhould endure: whereunto are annexed the promiſes of the Goſpell, for the comfort of Gods ſervants.

This Chapter a part of the viſion.

The ſumme whereof is a forewarning of the deſtruction of Ieruſalem.

Parts of the viſion.

1. Wickedneſſe of the people, cap. 8.

2. Their deſtruction, cap. 9.

3. Famine and peſtilence forerunning, cap. 10.

4. The miſeries of theſe who ſhould eſcape and goe into Captivitie, chap. 11.

Now in the 8. Chapter, the Lord having ſhewed unto the Prophet ſome ſecret abominations, and that in the Temple it ſelfe, whereby his anger was inflamed to the preſent execution of his vengeance; in this he declareth that he will be avenged forthwith, and the manner of his proceeding. The Chapter divideth it ſelfe into five parts. 1. The Lords denuntiation of this moſt grievous viſitation now at hand. 2. The manner of the Lords proceeding in two Commiſſions: The firſt for the marking and making ſure of all the godly before the deſtruction come. The ſecond for the deſtruction of all the reſt. 3. How the Prophet was affected with this grievous denuntiation, and how he intreateth the Lord for Ieruſalem. 4. The anſwer and

Summe of this ninth Chapter.

A denunciation that the Lord will be avenged preſently, and the manner of the execution, v. 1, 2. to 8.

Diviſion of this Chapter, verſ. 8.

9.

10.

and resolution which the Lord gives unto the Prophet, That he will not spare, and why. 5. The returne of that Angell whom God had sent to marke the faithfull, giving up his answer for the execution of his commission.

An opening of the seuerall parts of the Chapter.

In the manner of the denuntiation of this so terrible a destruction is set out: First, how the Lord himselfe did denounce it, crying with a loud voice in the eares of the Prophet, both to assure him of the certaintie of it, and also to stirre him up to a more due consideration of the dreadfulnes of the same. Secondly, the Lord shewes unto him the neerenesse of the execution thereof, saying, *Cause them that have charge over the Citie to draw neere*; meaning the enemies, whom he had appointed to be executioners of his wrath upon it, every one armed with a weapon in his hand, as being ready to destroy it.

v. 1. How the Lord himselfe denounceth it, shewing also the neerenesse of the execution.

For the manner of the execution of this slaughter, it is also set forth, First, by declaring how many they were who came to destroy, that is, six men, representing the chiefe Captaines of the Caldeans, or the Angels appointed for conducting the Armie. And these six are according to the number of the chiefe gates of Ierusalem. To signifie that the enemies should come in so great multitude and so mightily, that they should besiege the Citie on every side, so as none should escape out; and should rush upon them so furiously in every street, that they should fill all with the slaine, and cause the channels to flow with bloud. Secondly, it is set foorth, by shewing from whence these six came, which was from the way of the upper gate looking toward the North; signifying thereby, that these enemies should come from Caldea or Babylon, which was northward from Ierusalem. Thirdly, by declaring how they were prepared: every one in armes with his weapon in his hand, as readie to destroy. Fourthly, by setting downe whither these six came; which was to the great brazen Altar in the Temple. To shew thereby that God sent these destroyers chiefly for the pollution of his holy things, his sacred worship and religion. Fiftly, how amongst these destroyers, the Lord sends one speciall Angell for the marking and preservation of his faithfull ones in the Citie: to wit, the Angell of the Covenant, the onely Author of the preservation and salvation of his servants. And he appeares

v. 2. The manner of the execution.

In the number of the Executioners.

From whence they came.

How they were prepared.

Whither they came: viz. to the Temple for the pollution of it.

The Angell of the Covenant sent amongst them for marking the Elect. *Exod.* 28. 42, 43.

clothed

clothed with linnen, attired like to the High Prieſt, prepared to make an atonement; with an inkhorne alſo by his ſide, as ready to marke all his elect.

Levit. 16. 4.

In the third verſe is ſhewed, how and where the Lord appeared to give his commiſſions, both to the deſtroyers, and to the ſaving Angell.

Where the Lord appears.

1. The glory of the Lord appeares, removed from the Cherubins, where he had promiſed to dwell for ever, and ſtands upon the threſhold of the doore of the Temple, as now departing from them.

Afterwards is ſet downe verſ. 4, 5, & 6. how the Lord gave two ſtrait commiſſions or charges: The firſt is to the ſaving Angell for his faithfull ones: The ſecond to the deſtroyers concerning all the reſt.

How he gave two Commiſſions.

1. To the ſaving Angell for the Elect and faithfull ones. To ſet a marke upon them.

In the firſt commiſſion to the ſaving Angell, is plainly expreſſed, 1. what his charge or commiſſion was, namely, to goe thorow the midſt of the Citie, even thorow the midſt of Ieruſalem, and to ſet a marke upon the foreheads of ſundry to be knowne from the reſt in the deſtruction. 2. who they are that muſt be marked; that is, the godly abhorring all the abominations of the wicked: who are alſo deſcribed by two properties; Firſt, that they mourne and ſigh in themſelves. Secondly, that they cry out for all the abominations of the time wherein they lived. 3. Why they are marked; that when the deſtroyers came, they might not touch any of them.

And how they are deſcribed.

In the ſecond commiſſion to the deſtroyers, is contained, 1. The ſumme of their commiſſion: To follow hard after the ſaving Angell, and to ſmite all whom they found unmarked, without any reſpect of old or young, maids or children. 2. To take carefull heed, that they touched not any upon whom the marke was. 3. Where they ſhould begin to deſtroy. And that was at the Sanctuarie, at the wicked Prieſts and Levites, which miniſtred there, as being the cauſes of the ſinnes of the reſt.

The ſecond Cõmiſſion to the deſtroyers, to deſtroy all unmarked, without pitie. Not to touch the marked. To begin at the Sanctuarie.

4. How they ſhould proceed in the ſlaughter: from the Sanctuarie to defile the whole Temple; to fill the Courts with the ſlaine of them, who living ſo wickedly, had yet a vaine confidence in the Temple of the Lord, thinking that the Temple could ſhelter them from his vengeance. 5. The ſpeedie

How to proceed.

The speedie execution of their Commission.

execution of their commission, that as they were commanded, so they began at the Ancients which were before the House, destroying them first, and then the rest, untill they had made a finall dispatch thorow the whole Citie. And this is continued unto vers. 8.

3. How the Prophet was affected herewith.

Vers. 8. In the third place is set downe how the Prophet was affected with this terrible vision of this slaughter of Gods people, though himselfe should escape amongst them who were marked: That he fell upon his face, crying unto the Lord and making humble intercession for them; That the Lord would spare them, being but a poore remainder of the people of Israel, left after so many destructions.

4. The answer and resolution of the Lord.

That he would not be intreated, and why.

Vers. 9, 10. To which there followeth in the fourth place, the answer and full resolution of the Lord, thereby to stay the fervent prayer, and importunacie of the Prophet; and also to manifest his own justice, in that his most righteous proceeding. That he would not be intreated for them any longer; partly, because their land was full of blood, by their cruell oppressions of all sorts; and partly, for that the Citie where justice should haue beene had, for releeuing the oppressed, was now become full of corrupt judgement, and of all perversnesse, falling away more and more without hope of returning. But principally, for that they were generally become Atheists, shamelesly saying in their liues, The Lord saw them not, it was no matter how they liued, and making but a scoffe at all the Lords messengers and warnings; therefore his eye should not spare them, neither would he have any more pitie of them.

The returne of the cõmission of the marking Angell.

Vers. 11. In the last verse is set downe the returne of the answer and commission of the marking Angell: That he had done according to his commission; marked and made safe all the godly, that mourned for all the abominations; and so had fully prepared and made the way to the present execution of this finall destruction.

CHAP.

Chap. II.

Certaine directions to be observed in reading hereof, to teach us to make our right use of this vision and forewarning to our selves.

Dec 1662

AS this vision was first given by the Spirit of God unto Ierusalem, to warne them of the neerenesse and greatnesse of this destruction, which came unto them for our ensample: so is it written to admonish us upon whom the ends of the world are come. And is therefore our vision to awaken us, and to fore-warne us at this day, setting before our faces, what causes we have to watch and pray continually to prevent the like judgements, and by all meanes to seeke to pacifie the Lords wrath, before it be thus powred out upon us; and also to helpe to stirre us up hereunto. For the better understanding whereof, and the more fruitfull applying of it to our selves, to move us to unfeigned repentance, and speedie seeking the Lord, we must carefully observe these rules and directions following.

The vision is written to admonish us.
And is our visiō at this day,
To stir us up to watch and pray.

Rules to be observed in reading this visiō.

1. That we reade it and attend to it, not as to a bare historie, or an ordinarie discourse, but as to a divine message and gratious fore-warning sent from the Lord of heaven and earth in the riches of his mercy to every one of us, both high and low, rich and poore, to admonish us to meet him presently with intreatie of peace.

1.
To receive it as a message sent us from ỹ Lord.

2. Not to looke at the messenger, by whom the Lord now sends it, but wholly at him who sends it, and to hearken to his lively voyce, speaking unto us herein, and to the evidence and demonstration of his Spirit applying it unto us.

2.
To looke wholly at the Lord in it.
2 *Cor.*2.4.

3. To consider seriously that we have herein to deale only with the holy and mightie God, before whom all the wicked of the world shall one day be speechlesse; howsoever they are now most bold and wittie in excusing all their sinnes, and in speaking against every one who shall admonish them. And to this end to set our selves as in his presence, at whose appearing all the proudest of the earth (who dare now out-face his Majestie) shall in the guiltinesse of their consciences, creepe into the holes

3.
To remember with whom we have to deale herein.

holes of the rocks, and wish the hils and mountains to fall upon them, to hide them from his face. And withall to remember, that we must certainly appeare before him, & then be sure to answer for all our contempts and not profiting by his fore-warnings.

Isa. 2. 19. *Rev.* 6. 15, 16.

4. Herein also each of us are yet further to testifie our religion and reverence to the Lord, in receiving this, so far forth as it is his expresse word, or agreeable thereunto, and belonging to us, as that worthy patterne of true godlinesse, that holy *Iosiah*, though a King, did receive the discoverie of the abominations of Iudah, and the threatnings of the Lord; whose heart melted, so that he powred out teares at the same. And also so to humble our selves, turning to the Lords Covenant, and doing our endevour to cause others to turne, as he did at the Lords message sent unto him (though by so weake meanes, as might seeme) but by a woman, to wit, *Huldah* the Propheteſſe, because he knew it to be the word and message of the Lord. And that not only to so much as shall be pleasing unto us, but even to that part of it, that shall most directly touch vs. As indeed it shall be most happy for that man who shall so receive it, and shall so humble himselfe before his divine Majestie. Therefore we are every one to be so affected, as was old *Ely* the Lords High Priest, who disdained not to receive a most grievous and dreadfull message by the hand of young *Samuel*, a boy brought up under him; but chargeth him in the name of the Lord, to tell him every word which the Lord had spoke unto him, not to hide a word from him. And afterwards having heard it, in stead of being offended, he saith, *It is the Lord, let him doe what seemeth him good.* Yea, we shall most truly declare our homage and obedience to the word of the Lord, by submitting our selves wholly unto him, and each acknowledging our particular sinnes, as *David* did at the admonition of *Nathan*. That thereupon we may each receive that comfortable answer, *The Lord hath put away thy sinne.* And that we may all thus helpe to pacifie him, that he may not proceed to his heavy resolution; howsoever he shall humble us, for the manifold dishonours, which we have done to him by all our sins, and for causing his enemies to blaspheme his great name and Gospell, which he hath vouchsafed us the profession and libertie of, above most other people of the earth.

4
To shew our reverence to the Lord in receiving this message, as *Iosiah* did. 2 *King.* 23. 19

To humble our selves and to turne and cause others to turne. 2 *King.* 23. 1, 2, 3, 4. *Ezek.* 18. 30.

To be affected as old *Eli* was at the message of young *Samuel.* 1 *Sam.* 3. 17, 18.

And *David* at the voyce of *Nathan.* 2 *Sam.* 12. 13.

That we may receive the like comfortable answer.

5. Each

5. Each of us are to apply every part as ſpoken to us by the Lord particularly, and as making one bodie: for even the ſin of the Atheiſt, Idolater, Drunkard, and ſo of every wicked man, may be ſaid in ſome ſort to be the ſinne of each of us; and we are all liable to the puniſhments thereof, even thoſe of us, that thinke our ſelves moſt innocent and free from them. As the ſin of *Achan* is counted the ſinne of all Iſrael; for ſo doth the Lord tell *Ioſua* plainly, when he puniſhed them all; That Iſrael had ſinned, they had taken of the excommunicate thing, they had done that which *Achan* did. Even ſo the ſinnes of all the notoriouſly wicked are the ſinnes of us all, chiefly their open abominations. All of us are guiltie and endangered by the ſame, if at the hearing and ſeeing them, we have not mourned, as we ſhould, for the diſhonour done to the Lord, and his anger kindled thereby. Or if we have not cried for pardon, and ſought to turne away the vengeance, yea and done our utmoſt endevour each of us in our places & callings, to ſtop them, and the courſe of ſinne reigning amongſt us. None of us can juſtifie our ſelves, but God might for this very ſinne depart from us, as he threatneth *Ioſhuah* for *Achans* ſacrilege, and might leave us to be wrapped in the ſame judgement.

5
Each to apply every part as ſpoken to our ſelves particularly.
Sith the ſins of the wicked are in ſome ſort the ſins of us all.
As *Achans* of Iſrael.
*Ioſu.*7.11, 12.
See *Iunius* upon *Ioſu.* 7.25. confirmed out of *Auſtin.*
If we haue not mourned for them,
Cryed for pardon,
And ſought to ſtop the courſe of ſinne.
Ioſua 7.12.

6. We are to conſider that each of our particular grievous ſinnes doe not only hinder the power of our prayers, whereby we ſhould helpe to pacifie the Lords wrath; but alſo, in ſtead thereof, helpe to draw downe the anger of God, not only upon our ſelves, but upon the whole Land: more ſpecially and principally the notorious and outragious ſinnes of our moſt horrible tranſgreſſors, as of blaſphemers, ſcorners of God & of his truth, oppreſſors, drunkards, filthy perſons, and all impudent ſinners, who hale on the vengeance of God, as it were with cart-ropes. That it is his infinite mercy, that it hath beene kept off hitherto. And therefore howſoever ſuch men may imagine and boaſt of themſelves to be friends to their country, yet in truth they will be found the principall enemies: firſt to Ieſus Chriſt, doing as much as lieth in them, thereby to drive him out, & to ſet up Sathan in his roome; and do not only murther their owne ſoules without repentance, but alſo as much as ſuch ſins can, doe betray the Lords Anointed, his Church, & their native country, with all our

6
Each of our hainous ſins hinder our prayers & help to draw downe vengeance.
Chiefly of all impudent ſinners.
Iſa. 5.18.

Such are enemies to Chriſt, ſeeking to drive him out and ſet up Sathan,
And do betray all to y^e^ enemie.

our happinesse, into the hands of the bloudie enemie. Because for the sinnes of these principally, Gods vengeance comes upon his people, as here in this lamentable captivitie may plainly be seene. And therefore each of us are to finde out our owne particular sinnes, and in the reading and hearing hereof, to say, This is my sinne, which the Lord reproves and threatneth us all for, and me especially by name. So each of us are to begin to reforme our selves, or else we shall never be able to judge of the sinnes of others: much lesse have a right feeling of them, so as to be helpers to pacifie the wrath by our prayers, and to turne away the like plague from our selves.

And do betray all to the enemie. As in the Captivitie. Therefore each to find out our particular sins, and to reforme our selves.

Els we can neither judge of ỹ danger, nor helpe to pacifie the wrath.

7. Every one of us are to resolve with our selves, that whatsoever the Lord shall say unto us, we will doe it, as the people made profession to the Prophet *Ieremie* to doe, if they had had hearts to have performed it accordingly, and each to cast away our deerest sinnes, rather then they shall beat backe our prayers, and much more helpe to pull downe vengeance upon us. Because of that which God threatneth, that every soule who turnes not to all his Covenant, (so farre as he shall manifest it to his conscience, to be his Covenant) and that seekes not also with all his power to cause others to turne, shall perish. That same sinne wherein any one continueth shall be his destruction; and the endangering of all so farre as lieth in him. And this may serve for the generall directions in reading this vision, to make right use of it to our selves, for pacifying the wrath.

7. Each to resolve to doe whatsoever God bids us. Every soule ỹ seekes not to cause others to turne to the Covenant as well as himself, must perish. *Ezech.* 18. 20, 26, 30, 31, 32. *Deut.* 29. 19. *to* 25. Happy man who hath grace to learne this lesson, & forthwith to practise it.

Now to the Vision.

Chap. III.

The Lord is not wont to bring any terrible judgement upon his Church, but usually ever aforehand, to give warning thereof, neither at any time to warn in vain. And what cause we have for our manifold forewarnings to give our selves to watching & praier.

Vers. 1. HEe cried in mine eares with a loud voice, saying: Cause them that have charge over the Citie to draw neere, [or, the visitations of the City draw neere &c.] To come to the words of the vision. The Lord so plainly fore-

shewing

ſhewing this dreadfull captivitie, not only here in this Viſion, but alſo ſo many other wayes, and denouncing it by his Prophets ſo long before it came, declaring alſo the cauſes of it, ſheweth in the firſt place:

That he hath not beene wont to bring any notable judgements upon a people, eſpecially upon his Church, or where his Church hath beene, but he hath ever uſed to make the ſame manifeſtly knowne before, at leaſt to his owne faithfull ſervants amongſt them, and after as he foreſhewed it, ſo to bring it to paſſe, unleſſe his anger hath beene ſome way pacified.

God hath not beene wont to bring any notable judgemẽt on his Church, but to foreſhew it firſt, & then to bring it whẽ no repentance hath followed to prevent.

This we may ſee in ſundry of the moſt fearefull deſtructions that ever he brought upon the world, mentioned in his booke; In all which he hath left this carefully recorded, becauſe he would have all his people to be well acquainted with it.

As firſt before the deſtruction of the old world, beſides the plaine evidence of Gods vengeance at hand, being apparant and almoſt viſible in the ſtrange increaſe of the iniquitie, many of them being become Giants, to ſet themſelves impudently to fight againſt his Majeſtie, and againſt all godlineſſe, contrarie to the light of their owne conſciences, and for that all fleſh had corrupted their wayes; ſo as the earth was corrupted and filled with crueltie: he alſo warned them himſelfe in a ſpeciall manner, by the making of the Arke, and by the preaching of *Noah*. And this he did by the ſpace of an hundred and twenty yeeres before; which time he gave them to repent, ſtriving with them by his Spirit, chiefly in the Miniſterie of *Noah*, to bring them to amendment.

As firſt before the deſtruction of the old world. *Gen.* 6. 4.

Gen. 5. 11, 12.

Gen. 6. 3. 13.

1 *Pet.* 3 20. *Hebr.* 11. 7.

Secondly, before the Captivitie of the ten Tribes, which were caried away by *Salmanaſar* into Aſſyria, (from whence they never returned) beſides many other threatnings, dangers, warres, overthrowes and plagues: he alſo forewarned them long by ſundry of his holy Prophets, as *Ahiah*, *Iehu*, *Eliah*, *Michaja*, *Eliſha*; but more ſpecially, but even hard before, by *Obadiah*, *Hoſea*, *Amos*, *Ioel*, *Ionah*, and others. By all whom he foreſhewed that judgement evidently unto them, though they would not obey, but hardned their necks, and were worſe and worſe, untill the vengeance caried them away.

2. The captivitie of the ten Tribes. 2 *King.* 17. 3, 6.

2 *King.* 17. 14, 15, 16.

Thirdly, before this lamentable captivitie of Iudah, beſides this

3. Before this Captivitie.

this Viſion and many others, he forewarned them likewiſe, by ſundry of his moſt worthy ſervants the Prophets, raiſed up extraordinarily and ſent unto them, crying unto them early and late, Prophet after Prophet, and that for a long time together. But moſt plainly by the ſpace of threeſcore yeeres and more by *Eſay, Ieremie, Mica, Ezechiel, Zephanie*, and others, ſtill proclaiming this terrible deſolation. Although they likewiſe mocked his ſervants, miſuſed his meſſengers, growing daily worſe and worſe, untill there was no remedie.

Zeph. 3.1, 2, 3, 5. *2 Chron.* 36.15, 16, 17.

4. Before the laſt and utter ſubverſion of the Iewiſh nation. *Matth.* 3.10. *Matth.* 21.33, 44. & 24.23, 24. *Luc.* 19. 41. & 20.9. *Ioſephus de bello Iudaico.*

Fourthly, before that laſt & utter ſubverſion of the Iewiſh nation, he forewarned them ſundry waies, but in a more ſpeciall manner: Firſt, by the preaching of *Iohn* the Baptiſt, threatning them, That the axe was then laid to the root of the trees. Afterwards by our Saviour himſelfe over and over moſt evidently, ſetting downe in plaine termes the manner of their deſtruction, and the grievouſneſſe of it. And to omit all other admonitions by the Diſciples of our Saviour and his Apoſtles, *Ioſephus* in his ſtorie records, That beſides many terrible ſignes from heaven and earth, ſtrange lights in the nights, a dreadfull blazing ſtarre over the Temple, fearefull ſights of chariots and horſemen of fire, and an Armie marching towards Ieruſalem; a hideous voice was alſo heard in the Temple, at one of the Feaſts, ſaying, Let vs goe out of the Temple, and depart hence. There was moreover in a time of their greateſt peace & plenty foure yeeres before their warre began, one of the ruder and meaner ſort, whoſe name was *Ieſus*, the ſonne of *Hanani*, who being come forth of the country to Ieruſalem at the Feaſt of the Tabernacles, and going into the Temple, began of a ſudden to cry out with a loud voice in this manner, *A voice from the Eaſt, a voice from the Weſt, a voice from the foure windes, a voice againſt Ieruſalem, a voice againſt the Temple, a voice againſt the bridegroome and the bride, a voice againſt all this people.* This he continued day and night going thorow all the ſtreets of the Citie. And although he was rated and cruelly beaten, yet he never gave over, going up and downe the Citie thus: *Woe to Ieruſalem and the Sanctuarie thereof, woe, woe to Ieruſalem.* And thus he cried out eſpecially on their feaſt dayes, and that for ſeven yeeres and five moneths together, neither was he ever thought to be hoarſe or

weary;

weary; but went thus up and downe, being taken as a mad man, untill in the time of the ſiege going about upon the wall, and crying out lowder than ever before, *woe, woe to the Citie, to the Temple, and people:* and at laſt having added this voice, *woe alſo to me*, he was ſmitten upon the head with a ſtone, ſhot out of an engine, that hee died. And laſt of all, when they had ſuffered moſt grievous miſeries by bloudie diſſenſions amongſt themſelves, murthering one another, and by moſt pitifull famine, as ever was before, that they were inforced to eat ſuch things as their ſoules did abhorre, and which bred a moſt terrible peſtilence amongſt them, immediately before the taking and ſacking of the Citie, and putting them to the ſword, a voice was heard among the Chriſtians, which ſpake to them thus, *Goe forth to Pella*, which ſo ſoone as the Chriſtians had done, the enemie brake in upon them, and ſlaughtered the reſt with a moſt lamentable deſtruction. *Euſeb. lib. 3. c. 3.*

Fiftly, before the laſt and finall deſtruction to come upon the world by fire, the Lord hath foretold ſundry ſignes and tokens which ſhall come to paſſe, that none can plead ignorance, or have any more excuſe.

Before the finall deſtruction the ſignes are plainly foretold.

Thus the Lord hath beene wont to deale with the wickedeſt places of all other, eſpecially if any of his owne deare ſervants have beene amongſt them. As before the deſtruction of *Sodome*, becauſe his ſervant *Lot* was there, he will doe nothing untill hee hath revealed it to his faithfull ſervant *Abraham*, *Lots* uncle, that he may intreat for them. Afterwards, he makes it knowne to *Lot* himſelfe, who fore-warnes his ſonnes in law and daughters to have gotten them all forth of the burning, if it had beene poſſible.

This the Lord hath done to the wickedeſt places where any of his ſervants have beene. *Gen.* 18.7. *Gen.* 19.14.

This he did to *Ninivie*, that proud Citie, before hee would deſtroy it; for he pitying the great multitude of poore ignorant and ſimple people, which were amongſt them, in the bowels of his compaſſion, hee ſends his ſervant *Ionah* firſt to proclaime thorow their Citie; *Yet fortie dayes and Ninivie ſhall be deſtroyed.*

Yea to the Infidels themſelves in commiſeration, as to Ninivie. *Ion.* 4.10.

And to conclude this point: as hee forewarned Babylon and other the cruell enemies of his Church of their deſtructions; ſo hee hath as plainly proclaimed his vengeance to come

And even to Babylon, that his owne people may get out from her. *Reu.* 18.2,3,4.

come upon the ſpirituall Babylon, (which now holding ſo great a part of his Church in captivitie, ſtrives to captivate all the reſt) that all his owne people may by all meanes get out of her, and the reſt be left utterly inexcuſable.

He will not do any thing but he will firſt reveale it to his ſervants. *Amos* 3.7.

This may ſufficiently manifeſt his truth to everie conſcience, that we may boldly conclude this point with the Prophet *Amos*, That the Lord will doe nothing in his Church, in bringing in any deſtruction or terrible plague, but he will firſt reveale it to his ſervants the Prophets. He will make his owne faithfull ones to foreſee it by one meanes or other, ſo far as ſhall be for his glorie and their good. The reaſons of it alſo are moſt cleare why he will doe it.

Reaſons hereof. 1. For his owne peoples ſake. To ſhew his care for them. That they may prepare to meet him. Seeke to ſave others.

1. For his choſen ſake among them; that he may ſhew his love to his, and the care that he hath for them in the greateſt confuſions: to the end that they may gather themſelves unto him before, and prepare to be accounted worthie to be hid by him, or elſe delivered; or certainly ſome way finde comfort in the evill day. That hereby their love and care may better appeare unto the world, in their ſeeking by all meanes to ſave and pull others from the vengeance to come. More ſpecially, that their faith and obedience may be ſeene to all, how they beleeve and feare the Lord and the tokens of his wrath. And that they may ſet themſelves to become ſuters unto the Lord for the reſt, as *Abraham*, *Moſes*, *Ieremie*, and others; that ſo he may either ſpare all at their ſupplications; and that thereby the world may take notice in what high favour ſuch are with his Maj-ſtie, (even all they who make conſcience to walke in his Covenant, and endevour to be righteous in their generations) when he ſpares ſo ſinfull a people at their prayers; or at leaſt that their prayers may returne into their owne boſomes.

2. For the cauſe of the wicked. Though they willingly blind their own eyes.

Secondly, the Lord doth uſe to manifeſt his judgements aforehand even unto the wicked, as we heard, and for their cauſes alſo: howſoever they for the moſt part uſe all deviſes to flatter and harden themſelves: yea, to lull themſelves aſleepe in their ſecuritie, and to blinde their owne eyes, leſt they ſhould ſee the judgements of God comming upon them; and ſo ſtill perſwade themſelves that there ſhall be no ſuch matter. And this he doth alſo to declare the riches of his mercie towards the moſt

moſt wretched ſinners, and how unwilling he is to take vengeance, ſo long as there is any other remedie, or if they will turne unto him in any time. This is moſt apparent in the Lords infinite compaſſion in ſparing *Ninivie* that proud Citie, after *Ionah* had proclaimed, *Yet fortie dayes and Ninivie ſhall bee deſtroyed.* And alſo in reproving *Ionah* for his impatience, ſaying, *Thou haſt had pitie on the gourd, for which thou laboureds not, neither madeſt it to grow, which came up in a night and withered in a night: and ſhould not I ſpare Ninivie that great Citie, wherein are ſixe ſcore thouſand perſons, which cannot diſcerne betweene their right hand and their left, and alſo much cattle?* And hereupon it was that God ſpared it at that time, though after, when having forgotten that great deliverance, they fell into their old ſins, he tooke vengeance for all, as may appeare by the Prophet *Nahum*; executing moſt ſeverely, whatſoever he had formerly threatned. Hee dealeth thus moreover with the very wickedeſt, that every mouth may be ſtopped, and al the world compelled to acknowledge his judgements to be moſt righteous, thus to iuſtifie him therein, when no admonition at all will ſerve.

To declare the riches of his mercie, if they will turne.
Ier 17.7,8.
As to Ninivie.
Ion 4. 9, 10,
11, 12
Nah. 3.
That all may be inforced to acknowledge him righteous

So we ſee, how he hath ſet downe this point moſt clearely, and alſo the reaſons of it, and that he hath not bin wont to giue any ſuch warnings in vaine, or without moſt dreadfull execution of his wrath, where his warnings haue not beene regarded.

Conclusion.

Now then to apply this point to our ſelves: we are firſt wiſely to inquire, whether the Lord hath not likewiſe forewarned us, and that moſt plainly, of ſome terrible judgements towards this our Nation. That if we finde it ſo, we may then all know for certaine, that it is full time to looke to our ſelves, and to betake us all forthwith to ſuch a courſe, as whereby we may either altogether appeaſe his anger, or at leaſt in ſome ſort mitigate and aſſwage it. To come to our very conſciences: Muſt we not all be inforced to acknowledge and ſay with the Prophet *Amos*, *The Lion hath roared, who ſhall not then be afraid? The Lord God hath ſpoken, who can but prophecie?* Hath not the Lion roared upon us ſundrie times, as being ready to cruſh our bones in ſunder, or to devoure us at once: but principally within our freſh memory, when the proud enemie came againſt us in their Navie invincible? And more alſo when that long threatned day came, whereof

Application to our ſelves.
To try whether the Lord haue not warned us of ſome ſuch a judgement.
Amos 3. 8.
The Lion hath roared upon us.
1. By the proud Armado.
2. The long threatned day.

whereof the inſolent enemie had ſo much triumphed, and for feare whereof the whole land had trembled for ſo many yeeres together. But moſt of all in that more than Babyloniſh and unnaturall furnace; that helliſh crueltie, from which wee were ſo marueilouſly delivered in a moment, before we felt, or ſo much as feared any ſuch thing at all. To omit the inſurrection by the rude multitude, about the throwing downe of the incloſures, the danger whereof, all who are wiſe-hearted did manifeſtly ſee, if any bloudie enemie had ſet it on foot, to haue beene a Leader vnto them; which iſſue, all neere unto them did very greatly feare, had not the Lord ſo graciouſly prevented that perill in an inſtant, and quencht that fire, when the flame was now readie to have burſt forth ſo high, that getting above our heads, it would have beene hard to overcome it, without much bloud to have quenched it.

3. The Babyloniſh furnace.

4. The inſurrection about throwing downe incloſures.

And to paſſe over in ſilence all other the treaſonable devices againſt that our worthy *Deborah*, both before her comming to the Crowne and after, that almoſt never yeere was without ſome new plot, though continuing conſtant with our God, they were never able to touch one haire of her head: and ſince alſo againſt our *Ioſiah*, the breath of our noſtrils (of whom we have gloried as *Iudah* of *Ioſiah*, that under his ſhadow wee ſhould be preſerved ſafe amongſt our cruelleſt enemies, as we have beene untill this day, through the endleſſe mercy of our God) had they not almoſt taken him in their nets, to have made him and all his a perpetuall prey; if the watchfull eye of our gracious God had not wonderfully preſerved and delivered them? But to leave all theſe: Hath not the Lord moreover thundred out vengeance by his heavenly word in the mouthes of all his faithfull ſervants thorow the whole Land, for the abounding of iniquitie, and that for many yeeres together? Hath he not beſides ſpoken unto us from heaven, as hee did to Ieruſalem, ſeeming to have incloſed us all in that dreadfull tent, ſpread directly over all our heads, and compaſſing us in round on every ſide (which was ſo terrible to behold, with pillers of horrible darkneſſe, pillers of fire and pillers of bloud) about ſome twelve moneth before the Powder-furnace? At the beholding of which moſt fearefull ſight, all whoſe hearts were not utterly ſenſeleſſe, could not but tremble,

5. Treaſonable practiſes againſt our late Queene.

And ſince againſt our *Ioſiah*.

6. Vengeance thundred out by the mouthes of all Gods ſervants.

7. Threatned by the Lord from heauen from the fiery tent.

tremble, for feare of the Lords dreadfull anger: for mine owne ſelfe I remember it well, and hope I ſhall never forget it. Did he not alſo for a long time together, heretofore, ſend moſt ſtrange lights and flaſhings in the heavens, and even at that very inſtant of that threatned Powder-deſtruction in a terrible manner. Which howſoever they are taken now that they were but ordinarie matters, through the long continuance of them, and his forbearance of us, as the like forewarnings were unto Ieruſalem, and have beene to other places, which hee hath deſtroyed for their ſinnes; yet let this be ſeriouſly thought of, how we generally ſtood then affected with them: whether ſince the time that the Lord hath begun in a moſt ſpeciall manner to threaten deſtruction unto us from Rome, they have not beene farre more uſuall, till of very late yeeres, and much more dreadfull than formerly. Let us but call to minde, how fearefull theſe ſights were unto us, when they began in our remembrance, to be ſo ſeene in this our Nation. Moſt, who are of any yeeres, muſt needs remember the time, with the terrour upon mens hearts, that was thereupon. Beſides that, our Chronicles have ſpecially recorded thoſe firſt moſt dreadful apparitions of them, as of things not knowne before in our Nation, or at leaſt very rarely, or that the former were nothing in compariſon of theſe. When ſuch ſtrange impreſſions of fire and ſmoke were ſeene in the ayre, and the heavens from all parts ſeemed to burne over our heads, as the hiſtorie doth mention. We cannot have forgotten that wonderfull Starre, which appeared about two yeers before theſe began, continuing for almoſt ſix moneths together; which, as it was found by the learned, was in place celeſtiall farre above the Moone; otherwiſe than ever any Comet hath beene ſeene, or can naturally appeare. So wonderfull was it, as the learned did affirme, that the like was not read of to have beene ſince the beginning of the world. And therefore it was then accounted of amongſt the learned, to have beene of ſignification, not naturall, but divine, as ſent from God to warne the world of ſome ſtrange worke. Let us but call theſe things to minde, and withall the perpetuall danger that the Church of God and our Nation have beene in, in a more ſpeciall manner from Rome, ſince about that time, or not much before, together with

By ſtrange lights and flaſhings in the heavens.

How terrible they were to us at the firſt, our owne hearts can beare witneſſe.

Our Chronicles have recorded them. *Ann. Eliz. 17. Novemb. 14.*

The prodigious Starre. *Eliz. 15. Novemb. 18.*

with all our judgements and great deliverances ſince; and then thinke whether they may not juſtly ſeeme to foretell, that the Lord hath yet ſome greater worke to worke. Howſoever, this cannot hurt us to be warned by them, and to make better uſe of them, than Ieruſalem did, ſith they are undoubted fore-runners of the great and notable day of the Lord. And to paſſe over all other former tokens, (as the two great Tides recorded to have beene one within an houre after the other, and in the ſame moneth, when theſe grievous flaſhings ſo appeared; the dreadfull Earth-quakes, at that time, ſince, and the like:) hath not the Lord ſince then, cauſed the ſeas to roare and ruſh in upon us, as ready and threatning to have over-whelmed us all at once? At the very tidings whereof, and of the cry and ſcritching of all neere unto them, and the periſhing of ſo many; what heart was ſo flinty, which either did not powre out tears, or at leaſt quake and tremble at that terrible approching of the vengeance of the Lord? Hath he not alſo ſpoken unto us ſince then, even in the yeere next after, by ſo many ſtrange and ſudden overflowings of the leſſe rivers in the midſt of the Land? as if ſeas and flouds and all had offered their ſervice unto the Lord to execute his fierce wrath and moſt juſt judgement in overflowing and purging ſuch a ſinfull Land, and to have ſwept away all of a ſudden. Yea and this many times when no ſuch thing was feared at all, and in ſuch places where never feare of waters had beene heard of before. And yet to proceed: Hath he not proclaimed his vengeance in every part of our Land, by his undaunted Herald, the conſuming peſtilence, ſo many yeeres together, yeere after yeere, as this Nation hardly ever knew before? What place is there againſt which the ſword of the deſtroying Angel hath not beene ſhaken and ſtretched out in moſt feareſull manner, as ready to be avenged preſently? Can there be a more viſible meſſenger of the Lords anger? Is it not one of the foure chiefe plagues of God ſent for the ſins of a people, by which he threatneth to deſtroy, and a principall fore-runner of the moſt dreadfull, even of the bloudy ſword of the enemie? And hath not that ſword of the bloud-thirſty enemie beene drawne oft upon us? Hath it not conſumed and devoured about us, and made moſt grievous ſlaughters and deſolations, as it were, before our faces, and at our very

Acts 2. 19, 20.

Eliz. 17. *Nov.* 6. The dreadfull threatnings of the Seas.

Acknowledged by all to be an evidence of the Lords anger.

The inſolent over-flowing of the leſſe rivers.

The ſword of the deſtroying Angell drawne out ſo long together.

Ezek. 14. 19, 21. *Ezek.* 5. 17.

The ſword of the bloudie enemie devouring about us.

very doores, for many yeeres together heretofore? First, in the Low Countries; after in Ireland, laying it in many places as a desolate wildernesse; when in the meane time our selves have beene free at home; though all was principally aimed at us. And did not the Lord after all these, in that desperate rebellion and treason unmatchable, set the sword to the hearts of us all? Yea, did he not in that so extreme and deadly winter following soone after (some prints whereof remaine unto this day) proclaime and denounce to the consciences of all men, that hee hath a controversie with our Land? when hee began with the fowles of the ayre, smiting the fish in the rivers, with very many of the creatures, and destroyed the most sweet and pleasant flowers and herbes which grew upon the earth, wherein wee tooke chiefe delight; so as they are hardly yet repaired againe; threatning withall the utter famishing of the cattle, as if he had determined to destroy all things from off the earth? Did he not also by reason of the same, afterward cause amongst us a greater dearth of all victuals and other things, than ever in any mans remembrance; all sorts of things being considered together, and the continuance thereof so long, whereby so many of our poore were brought into so extreme povertie.

And howsoever he in pitie looking upon the poore, restored bread unto them (having both increased the corne upon the ground, and after by that lamentable raine in the beginning of the harvest, when the corne was readie to be brought into the barne, made it so as it could not be kept in long or hoarded up by Cormorants, and unfit to be transported) yet did not the dearth of all other victuals grow grievously for a long time together? Yea, and albeit, for a little time after this, he withdrew some of the former tokens of his fierce wrath, and turned the dearth into plentie againe, yet what was that so long as our sinnes not only remained, but were and are daily multiplied, so that the crie of them goeth up to heaven? Did not the Lord send his people Quailes to satisfie their lust, and yet for their grudgings and tempting of him, smit them while the flesh was betweene their teeth? And did he not in like manner amongst us that yere, through that unseasonable rain leave an evident print of his displeasure upon al or the chiefe kind of grain, to be remembred almost

And at length set to our very hearts.

The deadly winter threatning all creatures.

The grievous dearth of all things following upon it so long.

Though the Lord stayed some of these for a season, yet what is that to us so long as our sinnes remaine?

Israel smitten with the flesh betweene their teeth.

The prints of Gods diſpleaſure left on every peece of bread with us after plenty ſent.
Ieruſalem had divers yeeres proſperity before her laſt deſolation.
See the Centuries.

moſt in every peece of bread? Yea, that we may not deceive our ſelves in regard of any proſperitie ſince; Did not the Lord after thoſe ſo prodigious fore-warnings given to Ieruſalem, before her laſt utter deſolating, (as the hiſtorie reporteth) grant a moſt proſperous time for ſundrie yeeres together, like as alſo before the firſt beginning of this Captivity, as though there had beene now no more danger to be feared, nor that hee was angrie any longer; in ſo much as by their proſperitie, they aroſe to a farre greater height of all outragious impietie; yet in the middeſt of their jollitie and greateſt ſecuritie, ſo ſoone as ever they had filled up the meaſure of their iniquitie, vengeance came upon them without any more pitie.

God hath not left us without witneſſe, ſince then for many yeeres together every yeere ſome new warning.

The grievous ſnow.

The long ſcorching drought.

The dearth & ſcarcity of fodder, with the difficulty to preſerve the Cattle alive.
The famiſhmẽt ſince for bread, if God had not ſupplied from other countries.

But hath he left us without further teſtimonies of his anger ſince? What yeere hath there beene, wherein we have not either ſenſibly felt the ſmart of his diſpleaſure, and that ſometimes again and again, or beene in extreme perill thereof, although we haue beene uſually plucked from the danger in an inſtant; as we were from that hideous furnace: ſo that we have had commonly for many yeeres together, every yeere ſome one or moe new warning, to ſee if yet any thing would doe us good. And to come to latter yeeres, which are ſtill as it were before our faces: what monument maketh mention of ſuch a ſnow ever in this our Nation, ſo dreadfull and lying ſo long, as therein threatning utterly the periſhing both of man and beaſt? And ſince, the long drought in the Summer, wherein the heavens were made as iron, and the earth as braſſe in many parts, that it could not yeeld her increaſe; whereby the poore dumbe beaſts ſo mourned and periſhed for lacke of paſture, and for the extreme ſcorching of the weather mixt withall? Finally, ſuch a dearth and ſcarcitie of fodder and other nouriſhment to ſave the poore beaſts alive, as neither our age, nor our fathers have knowne before. And what our owne eſtate had been even for bread, the ſtaffe of mans life, (had not the Lord from forraine Countryes ſo graciouſly fed us, like as hee hath done ſundrie yeeres) all of us in our parts did eaſily ſee, when notwithſtanding all our ſupplies, ſo many of the poore were ſo pinched and diſtracted, to provide bread to ſave their lives. Finally, who is ſo ſenſeleſſe, or whoſe heart is ſo flintie, that mourneth not to

heare

heare ſtill of ſo many, who have beene able heretofore to releeve themſelves and families in good ſort, by keeping a Cow or two to give them milke, (the principall releefe of themſelves and their poore little ones) then inforced to kill or ſell them for very little, through lacke of food, and the money ſpent, or having loſt them through hunger, ſhall never be able (as is feared) to buy them a Cow againe, to the very breaking of their hearts, if the Lord by his Spirit doe not ſupport and ſtay them? Who can deny this heavie hand of God amongſt vs?

The utter undoing of ſo many poore.

Therefore to draw towards the ſhutting up of this point; what faithfull meſſenger of God in all the Land, in conſideration of theſe things and the like, and of all our moſt hainous and crying ſinnes, hath not (as it were) prophecied, plainly foretelling ſome more notable iudgement, that muſt needs follow after all theſe, if we did not repent thereby? And ſhall this word in their mouthes be vaine? Shall he threaten and ſhall he not doe it? In what corner of our Land hath he not ſtriven by his Spirit, at one time or other, by the Miniſtery of ſome of his faithfull ſervants, which, all about them might heare of, to have brought us to amendment? Whereby all ſorts haue beene convinced, as well as the old world by the miniſtery of *Noah*. Who hath beene ſo void of all ſenſe of ſin, that hath not perceived the very earth to bee corrupted with our abominations, and that hath not wondred that God ſhould beare with us any longer, being ſo many wayes evicted: eſpecially in ſuch ſtriving by ſo many for Popery, moe for Popiſh Atheiſme, and moſt for prophaneneſſe, and all licentiouſneſſe, againſt the moſt ſhining light of the glorious Goſpell of Chriſt? Or who hath beene ſo deafe, that hee hath not heard of, and trembled for the loud cries of the mercileſſe oppreſſors, of pride, and irreligious contempt of God amongſt us, knowing that the cry of them muſt needs have gone up to heaven, as will plainely appeare after? Yea, what ſimple man hath not at one time or other (in ſeeing our intolerable pride, and pitileſſe oppreſſions) cried out that ſome terrible plague muſt needs come upon this Nation, ſaying thus in himſelfe, as that poore wretch did in Ieruſalem, Woe, woe, woe to our ſinfull Nation? Hath not many a poore ſoule been of *Lots* mind, to remove their abode, though to their

The Prophets threatning vengeance every where.

God ſtriving with us by his Spirit, as with the old world by the miniſterie of *Noah*.

All convinced, wondring that he ſhould forbeare us, conſidering our ſinnes.

And as plainly preſaging ſome terrible judgement.

Many of *Lots* minde.

great loſſe, for the wickedneſſe of the places where they have dwelt, to live in ſuch Congregations where they might ſee ſome feare of the Lord? I ſpeake not of thoſe who have made a ſeparation from the Communion of Saints; but of ſuch as mourning for that rent, amongſt other our hainous ſinnes, doe yet continue with us in the true Church of Chriſt, as lively members thereof, and doe reioyce in all the tokens of Gods preſence ſtill with us. As namely, in all thoſe his ordinances and meanes of ſalvation, which through his mercy wee gratiouſly enioy; with our holy and ioynt profeſſion of all the wayes of life; as alſo, in many worthy Teachers and faithfull ſervants of God of all ſorts, with his heavenly protection and great deliverances of us all untill this day; and his chaſtiſing us ſo fatherly from time to time, that he may ſpare us, yea pulling us continually out of the imminent danger, as we ſhall ſee more after. And that I may ſpeake as in the preſence of Gods Majeſty, and appealing in reverence and love to every ſoule: Hath not he himſelfe in ſtead of *Ionah* manifeſted this unto us all from heaven, to cauſe all to acknowledge it, and to leave all more without excuſe, unleſſe we repent, that he threatned us, *Not yet forty daies*, and *England* ſhall be made a deſolation, (like as in thoſe dangers when hee brought the deſtruction ſo neere unto us) nor yet twenty dayes, nor yet ten dayes; no, nor yet three dayes, but even one day, and my fierce wrath ſhall be ready to bee powred out upon you, to make you an aſtoniſhment and an hiſſing to all Nations for your ſinnes? For what other thing did the threatning of deſtruction, ſo neerely to be executed, ſignifie, but even as to *Ninivie*? Surely, I am not able to conceiue; I ſubmit it to the judgement and conſcience of all the godly learned, and that Powder-vaut ſhall ever beare witnes. Notwithſtanding, hath he not once againe, and even untill this very day, called backe that moſt ſevere denunciation, and in his fatherly commiſeration and infinite pitie ſpared us, as he ſpared that ſinfull Citie; though we have not repented, no, not as they, in our abundant means. This hee hath done partly for his faithfull ones amongſt us, and partly at the inſtant intreatie of the dreſſers of his Vineyard, who have obtained of him, to ſpare us yet one yeere longer, to ſee, if wee will bring forth meet fruit in any time, and

The Lord himſelfe in ſtead of *Ionah* manifeſting the neereneſſe of deſtruction unto us.

Staid till this day at the inſtance of his ſervants, to ſee if we will turne at length.

and if no time, nor warning will ſerve, then to cut us downe.

Now we in ſtead of amending (by all theſe fore-warnings, with all the admirable deliverances and bleſſings which this Land doth injoy) waxing every day much worſe, and the crie of our ſinnes, with the malice and number of our bloudie enemies being daily increaſed, how can we thinke but that his vengeance muſt needs be at the doores; either that any peace can poſſibly be, ſo much as hoped for from him, ſo long as our hainous ſinnes ſtill remaine heaped up every day more and more? What heart therefore having any feare of the Lord (conſidering how his anger muſt needs be kindled, and remembring that implacable hatred of the bloud-thirſtie enemies, but waiting their day) doth not tremble in a certaine expectation of ſome imminent and farre more dreadfull vengeance, than ever wee felt in former times, unleſſe our hearts be ſome way ſtirred up to pacifie his heavenly Majeſtie by turning unto him to prevent the ſame.

We growing farre worſe for all meanes, vengeance muſt needs be hard at hand.

And our hearts conſidering it cannot but tremble in an expectation of vengeance.

And therefore to conclude this point: All theſe things being laid together, and ſet as it were in one view before our faces, principally, that above all other ſignes the Lord hath given us, that our third ſo terrible and infallible an admonition, in the helliſh Powder-furnace, ſith none of his warnings ſhall be in vaine, who can denie, but that he daily crieth in the eares of everie one of us with a loud voice, as he cried to *Ezechiel*, Thy viſitation, oh *England*, draweth neere. Therefore repent, watch and pray, leſt I come upon thee of a ſudden, and make thee as Ieruſalem; becauſe no warning will ſerve, neither wilt thou know the time of thy viſitation, nor be awaked out of thy deepe ſecuritie. But of this more fully hereafter, when wee ſhall come to ſee the ſinnes of our Land, written by the Lord himſelfe in the abominations of *Iuda* before her Captivitie, and that in ſuch capitall letters, that hee that runnes by may reade them. And how wee doe iuſtifie rebellious *Iudah*, living in theſe dayes of the ſhining light of the glorious Goſpell of Ieſus Chriſt, under ſuch a ſhelter as the Lords Anointed, and alſo under ſo good lawes commanding obedience thereunto; whereby our ſinnes muſt needs be farre more hainous and inexcuſable than theirs, or than ever they were in former time.

Concluſion. All theſe former conſiderations proclaime that our viſitation draweth neere.

And this may serve for a first cause, which we have to watch and pray: because the Lord cries so loud unto us all, That our visitation draweth neere, and that he will come on us suddenly, unlesse we repent speedily.

Chap. IIII.

The withdrawing of the Lords glorious presence from his Church, is both an evident signe of his displeasure, and a manifest threatning of his departure. And what cause wee have thereupon to watch and to pray to pacifie his Majestie, and to hold him still amongst us.

Verse 3. *And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the Cherub whereupon hee was, to the threshold of the house.*

The glory removing from the Cherub to the threshold of the Temple, shewes God readie to depart unlesse they repent.

A Second principall point which the Lord would have us all to observe to this purpose, is out of this third verse. In which hee revealed to the Propher how the visitation of the Citie, or the executioners of the vengeance determined upon it did draw neere; this is given as an evident token thereof: That the glorious presence of the Lord, named *the glory of God, the God of Israel* was gone from the Cherub, that is, from that place in the Temple, where the Lord had promised to dwell for ever, and from whence he was wont to shew his presence most sensibly (for from thence hee used to give answers) and now it stood on the threshold of the Temple, as readie to depart and utterly to leave that house and his people for their sinnes. In this therefore God would have all men to take notice:

The withdrawing the lively tokens of Gods presence, a signe of his departure and of vengeance at hand.

That it is a most dangerous signe of his purpose to leave a people, and of his vengeance hard at hand, when he beginnes to withdraw the most lively and sensible tokens of his presence from those places where hee was wont to dwell and shew himselfe most familiarly. As here for example, Although the

Temple

Temple remaine with the Arke and mercy ſeat, from whence he was wont to ſpeake immediately, from betweene the Cherubims; yet the glory is removed: the ſignes are there ſtill, but not the lively preſence as had beene in former time, which was indeed the true glory.

For further confirmation of this point: This we may obſerve in the booke of God; That when he hath beene well pleaſed with his people, and purpoſed to remaine with them, he then hath beene wont ordinarily to ſhew his preſence, and that (under the law) by ſome ſuch viſible or audible ſignes as whereby all might behold and heare him, or at leaſt perceive him ſome way. As in all the iourny towards Canaan, he went viſibly before them in the pillar of fire, and the pillar of the cloud. But when they had angred him by the golden calfe, he threatneth that he would not goe with them, that is, he would not goe before them in that viſible manner, as he had beene wont, to bring them to the land flowing with milke and hony, becauſe they were a ſtiffenecked people. He would ſend his Angell with them, but in his owne glorious preſence he would not goe before them as in former time, whereupon *Moſes* is importunate with him, that he would never carry them thence, if his preſence went not with them. And that it could not be knowne otherwiſe, that he and his people had found favour in his ſight, but when he went viſibly with them. Thus *Moſes* never leaves him, vntill he hath prevailed, that he will goe with them as he was wont.

God well pleaſed with his people, went to witneſſe his preſence by ſome apparant ſigne. As in the iourney towards Canaan. *Exod.*33.3.

Moſes urgeth the Lord ſo to goe before thē. For that it was the chiefe tokē of his favour.

The ſame we may ſee in the dayes of *Ioſua*, where the Lord having withdrawne his lively preſence, and ſuffered his people to be overthrowne before the men of *Ai*; *Ioſua* falleth upon his face before the Arke; faſting and mourning, and after a ſort expoſtulating with his Majeſtie, for that he would ſuffer his great name to be diſhonored. Whereupon God telleth him plainly that hee had indeed withdrawne himſelfe from them, becauſe they were execrable for *Achans* ſinne, neither would he be with them any more, unleſſe they deſtroied the excommunicate from amongſt them.

Secondly in the daies of *Joſuah* becauſe of *Achans* ſinne. *Joſ.*7.6. *Verſ.*12.

So likewiſe when he was angry with *Saul*, that hee would caſt him off, he doth not only take his good ſpirit of wiſdome and

3. When hee wil caſt off *Saul* he will ſhew him no ſigne of his preſence, nor anſwer him any way.

and government from him, and ſends an evill ſpirit upon him to diſquiet, and to vex him, but moreover when he asked counſell of him in his extremitie, he anſwers him not, neither by dreames nor by *Vrim*, nor yet by the Prophets. *Saul* had the Prieſts with the *Vrim* before the Arke, from whence the Glory was wont to appeare from the Cherubims: but the glory was removed, the Lord gave him no anſwer any more from thence.

1 *Sam* 16.14.
2 *Sam.* 28.6.

The like might be ſhewed ſtill in the ſtory further, as we ſhall ſee after in the particulars, but this may ſuffice for the preſent to manifeſt this point.

The ſignes of the Lords preſence in the dayes of the Goſpell, whereby to judge of our eſtate.

To returne therefore to our ſelves: we are firſt to inquire what are the moſt evident ſignes of Gods glorious preſence in his Church, eſpecially in the daies of the Goſpell, and hereby we are to judge of our eſtate, and whether in regard hereof we have not juſt cauſe to feare the Lords departure, without ſpeedy repentance, and all to give our ſelves to watch and pray.

Like as the word ſincerely preached and the Sacraments adminiſtred according to our Saviours inſtitution are the moſt infallible marks of the true viſible Churches of Chriſt, amongſt which he hath promiſed his preſence, ſo long as theſe are duly obſerved, maintained and reverenced; ſo we may marke alſo thorow the booke of God, foure moſt lively evidences of his glorious preſence in his Church amongſt his people.

Foure principally.

The firſt inward, viz. the ſpirit of God.

One whereof is more inward, felt chiefly in the ſoules and conſciences of men, to wit, the Spirit of the Lord accompanying the word, and the powerfull operation thereof in mens hearts, in and by the ſame word, to cauſe al men to acknowledge the Lord to be there.

The other three outward.

1. Abundance of ſanctified knowledge.

2. Holineſſe with peace & unity.

The other three are more outward and apparent to the view of the world, although they be nothing but the fruits and effects of the ſame ſpirit. The firſt of which three, is, when the Lord gives to his people abundance of ſaving and ſanctifying knowledge of his heavenly word. The ſecond when together with this knowledge, he worketh in them true holineſſe of life and converſation, and obedience to the ſame word: and withall peace and unitie among his people ariſing from the ſame.

The

The third is in protection, when he declares himselfe to be present amongst his people, in shielding and protecting them and overthrowing all the plots of the enemies, or casting a feare upon the enemie, that they dare not rise up against his Church and chosen flocke.

3. Protection.

For the first of these which is more inward, viz: The Spirit of the Lord, speaking and working powerfully in the word. It is not the word alone, nor the Spirit alone, but the word and Spirit going together. The Spirit accompanying the word, and speaking to the hearts and cōsciences of men, out of the mouthes of his seruants. This is the Tenor and the very substance of Gods covenant with his Church, for the infallible demonstration of his presence in it and with it. *And I will make this my Covenant with them (saith the Lord to his Church) My spirit which is upon thee, and my word which I have put in thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of the seed of thy seed, from henceforth for ever.*

The Spirit and the Word going together, are the tenour of the Lords Covenant.

Isay.59.21.

To make this more plaine;

As in the time of the law, not the Arke alone, nor the mercie seat covered with the Cherubims, but the answers from the Arke given immediatly from God, were the undoubted evidences of his most glorious presence amongst them, so this must needs be acknowledged of all: That not the Gospell alone, nor the bare ministery thereof, but the powerfull working of the spirit thereby, speaking to every mans soule and conscience, is the most evident demonstration of the same glorious presence in the daies of the Gospell. As for example, when the word is lively and mighty in operation, powerfull in converting mens soules and drawing the people of God after it. This is the true presence and arme of the Lord. As it was when the Holy Ghost was sent downe appearing in forme of cloven tongues like fire, to shew the heavenly fire, that should accompany the word and inflame the hearts of the elect: like as it then wrought wonderfully upon the consciences of the hearers, and that very worke was an infallible witnesse of the presence of the Lord, so is it now according to the manner of the working and measure thereof. When by the same spirit some are pricked at their hearts with remorse for their sinnes and made to cry out;

As the answers from the Arke then. So the Spirit speaking to mens soules now for example, when it is powerfull in converting and drawing men after it. *Hebr.4.12.*

As at Pentecost.

Luke 24.31.

Men

Men and brethren, what shall we do? as those who were so pricked at the hearts at *Peters* sermon. When other have their hearts burning within them, as the two Disciples going toward *Emaus*, at the opening and applying of the Scriptures unto them. When as others are smitten downe to the earth in the sense of their owne vilenesse and the Majestie of Iesus Christ, as persecuting *Saul*, who was made thereby a preaching *Paul*: And when others are compelled to confesse, That they never heard men speake so, as those who came of purpose being sent by the Pharises, to catch our Saviour. Or as the poore simple man who comming in and hearing the word so preached, is made thereby to fall upon his face, and enforced to acknowledge, That God is in these men of a truth: when others also shall receive such a strong assurance of the truth of God taught unto them, being indeed his very word, as they cannot be drawne away from it, by any violence or feare, no, nor yet by any perswasions, though an Angell should come from heaven and teach them otherwise.

When mens hearts burne at the hearing of it.

Acts 9 4,5. Others smitten downe at the voice of Christ. *Iohn* 7. 46. 1 *Cor.* 14 24,25.

1 *Iohn* 2 27. *Hebr.* 11.35.

Gal. 1.8.

And to conclude this point, This must needs be confessed of all to be the most cleere and invincible testimony of his most gratious and glorious presence, and of his spirit powred plentifully upon his Church, when by the power of the word, the blinde eyes are opened, the deafe heare, the stonie hearts are bruised, the dead in sinne are raised to a new and holy life: for this is not a worke of flesh and bloud, but of the Spirit of the Lord onely. This was a principall part of that lively presence, whereby he was so wonderfull, and after a sort visible in the primitive Church, when the same day were added to the Church about three thousand soules by the preaching of *Peter* and the other Apostles; and after, when the Church increased so admirably. And by this he hath promised to be with his faithfull ones, teaching his truth sincerely unto the end of the world. This finally is the full accomplishment of that promise; To powre downe his Spirit upon his people in the dayes of the Gospell, when he would gather his Church in any place, as we may see thorow all the Historie of the Acts. And even as it was then, so is it now according to the measure of grace; whereby he sends downe his holy Spirit upon any Congregation. And in some

When the blind see, deafe heare, dead raised up by it. *Luke* 4.18. *Matth.* 16.17. *Iohn* 1.12,13. *Acts* 16.14. & 2.37.

This a principall part of the visible presence in the Primitive Church. *Acts* 2.16,17. *Matth.* 28.20. And of the promise to be with his to the end of the world.

some Congregations under faithfull Ministeries, all these (blessed be God) are apparent, thus graciously manifesting his presence thereby. And therefore the more generally that this operation appeares in Preachers and people, the more visibly doth the glory of the Lord shew it selfe, and the more securitie may such a people have for the certaintie of the Lords presence continued amongst them. Every man may discerne and know it hereby.

But contrarily, this is as evident a signe of Gods departure from a people, and of some heavy judgement hasting upon them, when either the preaching shall become generally cold and fruitlesse (except in some small remnant, which evermore the Lord doth reserve in his Church) or though it be powerfully preached by some few, yet men shall become generally more obstinate, blind, hard-hearted, and without feeling, given up to follow their lusts with greedinesse, when by it they shall have their hearts as hard as the nether mill-stone, or the Smiths stithie, that the oftner they are smitten, the harder they are. And further also this is so palpable, that it may be felt, when men shal come to this height of prophanenesse, that hearing the most excellent Prophets of God, they shall heare them only as those who have pleasant voices, listening to their words, but not doing any thing in effect, which they teach, as the people heard the Prophet *Ezechiel*. Thus it went with them very generally before this Captivitie, according as the Lord had bidden the Prophet *Isaiah* to denounce, threescore yeeres and more before it came; *that by hearing they should heare and not understand, and seeing they should see and not perceive, but have their hearts made more fat, lest they should convert and be healed.* And ever the neerer the vengeance approached, the more apparent this judgement was, as appeareth in the Prophets, untill their Land was laid desolate, like as the Lord had threatned them before. So was it also before that last utter desolation of that Nation of the Iewes: whereupon we may observe this, that no one Scripture is oftner alledged by our Saviour, and by *Paul*, and cited by all the Euangelists, than that of *Isaiah* is against them; to shew how that was fulfilled in their obstinacie, which was so long before denounced by the Prophet, and that the fulfilling

The contrary a token of Gods departure, and of judgements approaching. *Isa.* 6.9,10,11. When the word shall be without power. When men become rather worse by it.

Onely hearing, not doing. *Eze.* 33.31,32.

Thus before this Captivitie. *Esa.* 6.9,10,11.

Ever more sensible the neerer the vengeance. *Matth.* 13.14. *Marc.* 4 12. *Luc.* 8.10. *Iohn* 12.40. *Acts* 28.26. *Rom.* 11.8. *Iohn* 12.39. Whence this sentence so oft beaten on by our Saviour, and the Prophet.

filling of it, was a cleare evidence, that the Lord intended their ejection and subversion. Thus saith our Saviour plainly, Therefore could they not beleeve, becauſe *Eſaias* ſaith againe, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardned their hearts, that they ſhould not ſee with their eyes, nor underſtand with their hearts, and ſhould be converted and I ſhould heale them.

The moſt dredfull ſigne of the Lords departure, when he ſhall begin to plucke away them that ſtand in the breach. *Ezech.* 3. 25, 26, 27. *Exod.* 32. 10. *Pſal.* 106. 23. *Ezec.* 22. 30, 31. *Jer.* 36. 5. & 37. 38. *Ezec.* 3. 25.

But of all other this is the moſt dreadfull ſigne of the Lords removing from any place, when he ſhall begin to take thoſe his ſervants away, or to cauſe their tongues to cleave to the roofes of their mouthes, by whom he was wont to ſpeake ordinarily in this powerfull manner, and to whom he uſually gave this teſtimonie in the conſciences of them that heard them. That the Lord ſpake in them indeed: when he ſhall plucke away thoſe whom formerly he kept, as *Moſes* in the breach to ſtay his vengeance, what doth he elſe but ſay, Let me alone that I may deſtroy them at once. Thus he dealt with the moſt faithfull Prophets before the Captivitie, ſhutting up *Ieremie* in priſon, letting *Ezechiel* be in bonds, afterwards removing him from them. Or when the Prophets in ſtead of ſmiting at ſin, with the mighty arme of the ſpirit of the Lord, *viz.* his owne word powerfully preached, ſhall begin to ſmite with the weak arme of fleſh, namely, the inticing words of mans wiſdome, and with the oſtentation of humane learning and eloquence, and this as ſhouldering forth the pure word of the Lord ſincerely preached, as being too weake and meane. The more ſenſible this judgement groweth in any Church, the more is the glory of the Lord removed to the very threſhold; the more alſo is his utter departure to be feared, and the finall leaving of ſuch a people without unfained and ſpeedie ſeeking to pacifie him.

2 *Cor.* 10. 4. 1 *Cor.* 2. 1, 4. Or when the Prophets ſhall ſmite with the weake arme of fleſh.

To conſider whether the Goſpell hath y ſame powerfull operation as formerly.

Now to returne to our ſelves, and hereby alſo to diſcerne of our eſtate; Let us all who ever have had any true feeling of this working of the Spirit of the Lord in us, and whoſe conſciences are not utterly ſeared, or who have uſed to obſerve the manner of Gods working in his Church, enter into a due conſideration hereof. Let us examine this betweene the Lord and our owne conſciences, whether the preaching of the Goſpell have ſtill that operation amongſt us, which ſometimes it hath had to

convert

convert mens ſoules, to draw multitudes after it in the love of it ſelfe, unleſſe it be haply to heare ſome man of fame, or for his rare and ſingular gifts, or for ſome like by-reſpects. And whether this power of it be not fearefully abated, except in ſome very few places; and thoſe for moſt part, where formerly it hath not been, as in ſome rude countries towards the Northern parts, whither it is daily obſerved to remove, as ready to take the farewell, when it hath gathered forth Gods choſen of them, and convinced the reſt. And whether Satan, Antichriſt, & this evill world, with the pleaſures and pompe of it, doe not draw men wonderfully from Ieſus Chriſt, to follow after them: whether multitudes ruſh not violently to all licentious profaneneſſe, in ſtead of the zealous profeſſion of the Goſpell of Chriſt: others to Poperie and ſuperſtition againe, which was ſo far rooted out of our Land, and by the moſt abhorred, and this after the time that God hath more diſcovered the abomination of that bloudie religion, than ever heretofore. Let us but call to minde, how it hath been formerly with us, in thoſe places where God was wont to ſpeak unto us by his meſſengers, and how it is now for moſt part: whether in many places, where the Arke of God ſtill remaines, I meane the Word and Sacraments, whether, I ſay, the glorious and lively voice of the Spirit, that piercing of our hearts, that burning in our ſoules, with thoſe unſpeakable comforts which we were wont to finde therein, be not decayed exceedingly? whether it be not with all who are fallen to faſhion themſelves to the extreme licentiouſneſſe and looſeneſſe of the time, even as it was with *Saul*, That the Lord ſpeaks to them no more, though they have haply the ſame Preachers, & the booke of the Law, and heare the curſes againſt their ſinnes, yet they neither feele nor feare them any more? whether that lively preſence which did ſhake their hearts, be not utterly gone? yea, whether we doe not ſee this generally, that men are every where more voide of all feeling of ſinne, and of the feare of any judgement, whereby that ſpirituall judgement doth daily ſeize upon us moſt evidently? That by hearing the threatnings againſt us, we heare but underſtand no more; and ſeeing the ſignes and tokens of his wrath for our ſinnes, we ſee them indeed, but we are moved no longer with them; but as

Except in ſome few places, and removing.

Whether the Lord ſpeake ſo ſenſibly to mens ſoules as heretofore.

Whether it be not with all the licentious, as with *Saul*, that God ſpeaks to them no more.

That men be not generally more void of feeling and feare.

Nor any more moved as formerly.

Hearing heare not, and seeing see not.

as they, so we have our hearts more fat, our eares more deafe, and our eyes still more blinded? And if we shall finde it thus, That these and all other signes mentioned, are in great measure come upon us, let us answer unfainedly, whether the Lord doth not sensibly threaten and proclaime to depart and leave us altogether, unlesse we repent; having thus far already withdrawne himselfe from us. And to conclude this point, whether it be not full time to seeke to pacifie and stay him amongst us, if we be not weary of his abode with us, and of our happinesse thereby.

Whether God doe not hereby threaten his departure, and it be not full time to seeke him.

But of this more in the next Chapter, where we shall have cause to inquire of the outward tokens of the Lords glorious presence, and what a removall he hath made thereof, as likewise we see that he hath of this inward. Thus much therefore shall suffice to have spoken of this second cause, which we have all to watch and pray, yea, even to weepe and cry after him, to returne unto us againe, in shewing amongst us the power of his Spirit, as ever in former time, and to abide with us for ever, that he never leave us to our bloudie enemies.

Chap. V.

How the Lord is most unwilling to depart from his Church, so long as there is any other remedie, which he manifesteth in his oft threatning to take his leave, before he goe indeed. And of the outward tokens both of his glorious presence in his Church, and of his departure from it. And what cause we have thereupon to watch and pray continually.

The Lord makes sundry removes before he depart; all which were tokens and forerunners of his departure.

And the Glory of the God of Israel was removed, &c. A third point specially to be observed is this: That the Glory of God removed not once only, but five severall times in this vision, before it departed; and that it removed not all at once, but so oft, going away by degrees, and that most sensibly. By which he would cause the Prophet most clearely to behold his holinesse and justice; that he must needs depart

depart from them for their iniquities, wherewith they grieved him; and that he was not taking his farewell: and yet withall alſo to ſee his mercy and tender compaſſion, and how he was (as we may ſo ſpeake) moſt unwilling to depart and leave his people to ſo many miſeries; even Ieruſalem his owne Citie to ſuch a deſolation, if any remedie would have beene found. This he makes knowne unto them, to ſee if it would worke to ſtirre them up to ſeeke to retaine his preſence amongſt them.

The first remove. *Chap. 9. 3.*

For the evident manifeſtation hereof, Firſt, the glory removes from the Cherub, and ſtands upon the threſhold, as ready to depart. 2. It removes higher, and ſtands over the dore of the houſe. 3. It removing from above the dore, and ſtanding againe upon the Cherubims, the Cherubims mounted upward from the earth towards heaven, as ready to take their flight, and leave the Temple altogether. Fourthly, after this the Glory removes to the midſt of the Citie; thereby ſeeming to warne the Citie of the Lords departure. Laſtly, from thence it removes out of the Citie unto the Mount of Olives, as utterly taking leave of them, and giving them a laſt farewell, untill their Captivitie was accompliſhed, and his anger appeaſed. Theſe were the removes.

Whether he hath not made as many ſenſible removes amongſt us outwardly.

Here we are all againe to inquire yet more carefully, whether he hath not made as many and as ſenſible removes of his glorie amongſt us of this our Nation, and thereby given us as many plaine evidences of his departure; not now in a viſion, but ſo as all men muſt needs ſee and confeſſe it: and alſo whether withall he hath not as clearely and tenderly manifeſted (as I may ſo ſay) his unwillingneſſe to depart from us, if any thing can ſerue to reforme us. This is a point of moſt ſerious conſideration, and ſuch an one, as it were an exceeding mercy of the Lord, and a token of his gracious purpoſe toward us, if he would but vouchſafe us hearts generally to conſider of aright, as in his preſence, and as we muſt all know it one day.

To the end we may conceive it the better, wee are firſt to conſider wherein the glorie of the Lord appeareth outwardly in his Church ſo as it may be beholden of all round about it, even of the very enemies. As for the former evidence it being more inward, is to be perceived chiefly of the inward man, the ſoule and conſcience, when God ſo ſpeakes unto them.

The outward glory consists in three things

This outward Glory consists in three things principally, as was said, whereby not only the Lord himselfe is magnified amongst his owne people, yea to be seene and acknowledged of others, but also by which he makes his people to be glorious in the eies of others, and to be honoured and feared of their enemies.

First in abundance of heavenly and sanctified knowledge. *Esa.* 2. 2, 3.

The first is, when he bestoweth upon his people such abundance of heavenly and sanctified knowledge of his word with an hungring after the same, as that the earth seemeth to be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, like the waters that cover the sea, as the Prophet *Esay* speaketh. This he promiseth to do in his Church when he will shew his glory in it, in the dayes of the Gospell. At what time the Church being exalted as upon the tops of the mountaines, there shall be such a hungring and thirsting after the word of the Lord, that men shal incite & provoke one another, saying, Come, let us goe up to the house of the Lord, for he will teach us his waies, and we will walke in his paths. Where he thus puts his lawes into the minds of his people, at least in a vehement desire of it; That they all seeme to know him from the least to the greatest of them; this is a visible token of Gods covenant with such a people, and the pardon of their sinnes, that he is their God, and this is his glory upon them.

Ier. 31. 33, 34.

2. In holinesse of life accompanying it. *Ezech.* 36. 23, 24, 25, 26.

A second visible token is this, when this knowledge is accompanied with obedience and holinesse of life, when he thus writes his law in their hearts, creating in them new hearts and new spirits. Thus the Lord promiseth to be sanctified in his owne people before the eyes of their enemies, when he shall cleanse them from all their filthy sinnes, as with pure water; when he puts his spirit so upon them, as to cause them to walke in his statutes, to keepe his judgements and to doe them: when he puts his feare so generally into their hearts, as to cause them not to depart from him. Then he makes this covenant for himselfe, that he will not depart from them. And chiefly when together herewith, he gives peace and unity amongst them, that they have one heart and one way. That the Lambe may lodge with the Wolfe without danger; the poore harmelesse Christian, with them who have beene by nature as bloudy as Wolves; when the little childe may leade the Lion, even a childe bringing the word of the Lord may perswade and leade them, who were otherwise as proud and fierce as

Chiefly when he gives peace and unitie, one heart and one way. *Ier.* 32. 39, 40. *Isa.* 11. 6.

Lions.

Lions. And when the ſucking childe may play upon the hole of the Aſpe; when the poore ſervants of the Lord, who are for harmeleſneſſe as little children, may be without perill in the preſence of them, who were ſometimes as venomous as the Aſpe and the Viper. When they ſhall feed and communicate together cheerefully and lovingly in the word and Sacraments, and in all the religion and ſervice of the Lord, and none to hurt in all the mountaine of the Lords holineſſe, within the bounds and limits of his Church. By this all muſt needs ſee, that ſuch are indeed the Diſciples of Chriſt, when they love one another. And when in regard hereof, the feet of them who bring the glad tidings of peace, to wit, of all the faithfull preachers of the Goſpell, publiſhing life and ſalvation, and working this obedience and love, are beautifull, when their comming among a people is moſt acceptable, as of the meſſengers of the Lord of hoſts.

Holy unity the marke whereby all may know Chriſts Diſciples. *Ioh.* 13. 53.

Now both theſe are ſuch evident demonſtrations of the glory of the Lord upon a people, that they make them amongſt whom they are conſpicuous and eminent, to be a glorious people, and cauſe them to be had in honour, and to be feared of all nations round about them.

Holineſſe and unity make Gods people glorious in the eyes of their enemies. *Deut.* 4. 5. 6. 7. *&c.*

This *Moſes* ſheweth plainly in *Deut.* 4. where he thus ſpeakes to the people of *Iſrael*: Behold, I haue taught you ordinances and lawes, as the Lord my God commanded me, that you ſhould doe even ſo, in the Land whither you goe to poſſeſſe it. Keepe them therefore and doe them; for this is your wiſdome and vnderſtanding in the ſight of the people, which ſhall heare all theſe ordinances, and ſhall ſay, Onely this people is wiſe and of vnderſtanding and a great nation: for what nation is ſo great, unto whom the Gods come ſo neere unto them, as our God is neere to us in all that we call unto him for.

The Lords people bidden to glory in theſe. *Jer.* 9. 23. 24. *Rom.* 14. 17. The kingdome of heaven in holineſſe, peace and joy.

The Lord himſelfe alſo hath bidden all his people to glory in this, That they know and feare him, not in their wiſdome, ſtrength, or riches; declaring all the glory of theſe earthly things to be nothing to that, and all the true outward glory of a people to conſiſt in their holineſſe and peace among themſelves, and in the right knowledge and ſincere profeſſion of his heavenly word. As the kingdome of heaven, which is inwardly felt in every one of Gods ſervants, is in righteouſnes, peace & heavenly

Christ visibly reigneth in such congregations.

joy: so when these abound amongst any people, there is the kingdome of heaven truly begun, and Christ reigning visibly. Such were those worthy congregations mentioned in the Acts, and those to which *Paul* writ his Epistles; and such are all Churches which are like unto them at this day. And even as these things also doe more abound and are more apparant among them; so are they still more glorious, and Christ more evidently holding up his scepter there. Thus much for the two first parts of the outward glorie.

3. The third principall outward signe is his glorious protection of his people.

The third principall thing, whereby the Lord is wont to declare his glorie in his Church so brightly, as that it may be beholden of all about, is in the protection and defence thereof. And this is more visible also, when he doth miraculously deliver it, plaguing and overthrowing all the enemies, with all their wicked devices, which they plot against his people.

As 1. of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Iacob*. *Gen.* 20. 16. 26. 9, 10, 11, 12. & 27. 42. & 28. 29. 31. & 24. 32.

To omit the carefull protection of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Iacob*, with all theirs, in all places whersoever they went; the smiting of their enemies, and that herein stood a chiefe part of their honour: was not this that glory whereby he did so grace his Church in Egypt, when he sheltered his people, and made them to grow, notwithstanding the cruell oppressions of their enemies? when they were as the bush in the midst of the fire that yet consumed not? And secondly, when he plagued the Egyptians, and still kept his people safe in the midst of all those miraculous judgements.

2. Church in Egypt.

3. Going before them, and protecting them in all the way towards Canaan. *Exod.* 33. 3, 4.

Thirdly, when he went before them out of Egypt and thorow the wildernesse towards Canaan, in the pillar of fire and of the cloud, so conducting them that the enemies could not come at them, neither by day nor night. In regard whereof, he being angry with them for the golden calfe, had threatned that he would not goe up with them, because they were a stiffe-necked people: as they sorrowed and wept for this, so *Moses* in particular saith, If thy presence go not with vs, carry us not hence. And wherein, saith he, shall it be knowne that I and thy people have found favour in thy sight? Shall it not be when thou goest up with us? So I and thy people shall have preheminence before all the people of the earth: for which importunitie of his the Lord condescended thus still to continue his happy presence in that apparent manner.

vers. 15. This the most cleare testimonie of Gods presence.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, the Lord declared his glorious presence in the miraculous keeping of their land, that no enemie should invade it, nor so much as once dare to attempt the same, or thinke of any such matter; no, not then when all their men went up generally thrice in the yeere at their solemne feasts to Ierusalem from all the parts of their land, and none left at home to keepe their frontiers from invasion, or houses from spoiling, but a few poore women and children. As he had promised this unto them, so he faithfully performed it, so long as they continued to know and feare him. So long as they made any conscience to retaine those two former parts of his glorie in knowledge and obedience, so long also continued this their gracious preservation: yea, so long as they would but humble themselves under his hand at those his threatnings and at the shaking of his rods against them, promising amendment, and would then beleeue and obey his Prophets, so long abode this glory with them.

4. In miraculous keeping their land.

This continued so long as they were carefull to know and obey him. *Exod.* 23.21.22. *Psalm.* 107.

This the Lord wrought moreover in such strange deliverances of them from all that did offer to assaile them, and in such great overthrowes of their proud enemies, as never were heard of before in any nation. As in their delivery in the Sea, with the overthrow of the proud Egyptian: many a time in the wildernesse: in setting them also in Canaan by *Iosuah*; no man being able to resist them, so long as they obeyed him. So likewise in the daies of the Iudges, though they provoked him by their rebellions, yet ever usually when they sought him againe, humbling themselves, he shewed himselfe their deliverer, fighting for them both from heaven and earth, with haile and thunder, and all his hosts, causing the very Sunne to stand still untill the people avenged themselves upon their enemies.

5. In their wonderfull deliverances & overthrowes of their enemies.
As in the sea.
The wildernes.
Setting them in Canaan.
In the dayes of the Iudges.

Ios. 10.13.

And yet more specially in their famous victories in the daies of *Samuel* against the Philistims. In *Iehosaphats* victorie against the Ammonites, the Moabites, and them of mount Seir, causing their enemies to turne their swords upon themselves, and every one to fall upon another. But above all, in that wonderfull deliverance of Ierusalem in the daies of *Ezekiah*, and that notable overthrow of that proud and blasphemous *Senacherib*, and his huge Armie; when the Angell of the Lord slue an hundred and fourescore thousand of the enemies in one night: upon which

of *Samuel*.
of *Iehosaphat*. *2.Chron.* 20.21. 23.

2.Chr. 32.20,21. *Ezekiah* in the overthrow of *Senacherib*.

which considerations, and the like, in former times, the Holy Ghost saith, that *God is well knowne in Iudah, his name is great in Israel.* All the world talked of his name and feared. Because as his Tabernacle was there, so there he brake the arrowes and the bowe. There he shewed his puissance and his power, restraining the rage of the enemies, and turning it unto his praise, and so there made himselfe terrible to the Kings of the earth.

By which Gods name was great in Israel. *Psal.* 76. 1, 2, 3, 4, 12.

To conclude this point likewise. This is a principall part of that glory of the Church in the earth, which is so foretold by the Prophet *Esay* to be in the Churches of God, in the flourishing estate thereof, in the daies of the Gospell. That when the Lord should wash away the filthinesse of his people by his word and spirit, he would create upon every place of Mount Sion, and upon the assemblies thereof, a cloud and a smoake by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory should be a defence: and a covering should be for a shadow in the day from the heat, and a place of refuge, and a covert from the storme and from the raine. In which words, all these parts of the Lords glory upon his Church are compriſed, evidently foretelling, that as he would adorne and glorifie his Church then with abundance of knowledge and holinesse; so his protection should shelter it from all danger, as the coverings did the Tabernacle. And this indeed was the glory of the Primitive Church, according as it was spoken of by *Esay*. Yea, every wicked man, whose conscience is not utterly seared, when he commeth into any such a Congregation, where these three shine bright, is inforced to acknowledge such a place to be a glorious and blessed place, and God to be there; untill that men have by their disobedience to the word, and by their maliciousnesse, put out the eye of their soule and conscience altogether.

A principall part of the glory foretold to be on the Churches in the daies of the Gospell. *Esai.* 4. 4, 5, 6.

These the glory of the Primitive Church. So at this day.

Application. First to Iudah. How God had withdrawn the outward glory to foreshew his departure.

To applie all this. And first to this people of *Iudah*; If we marke well, we may cleerely see how God had wonderfully withdrawn from them that outward glory which formerly they had enioyed, and had also shewed them evident tokens of his departure in every one of these respects, before he went away utterly. And first for holy knowledge, when they daily waxed more blind and senseleſſe by all the paines of their Teachers, and all other their forewarnings, so that they were worse therein then the oxe and

1. All holy knowledge decayed. *Isai.* 6. 10.

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the asse, as the Prophet *Esay* complained many yeeres before. Secondly, for holinesse of life, the abominations following wil evidently demõstrate, for reverence of the Lords messengers, in that they misused them untill there was no remedy. So for peace and unity, when *Ephraim* was against *Manasseh*, *Manasses* against *Ephraim*, & both against *Iudah*: when all the godly, who followed the true Prophets, and cleaved only to the word & the covenant of the Lord, were generally hated, made as signes and wonders, like as the Prophets were whose word they obeyed. And lastly for protection, when as the glory was almost gone in *Ezechias* daies, when he himselfe & *Ierusalem* were in that danger by *Senacherib*: and cleane gone by *Manasses*, at what time he was carried away captive into *Babylon*. Afterwards also was *Iosiah* their shelter cut down by the enemy, which was the next & most manifest forerunner of the final departure & of their glory. So they had after this, overthrow after overthrow, until this plague was utterly come upon them, and their glory also departed without hope of recovery, till Gods anger was fully accomplished upon them. Thus we have seen this point at large, wherein the outward glory of the Church consists, and how all this was fully verified amongst them, according to the vision: that God had indeed made all these removals of their glory before his finall departure.

Isai. 1. 2. Holines gone.

2. *Chro.* 36. 15, 16. So peace and unity departed. *Isai.* 9. 21.

Isai. 8. 18. 3 Protection oft almost gone.

Lost utterly in *Iosiah*.

Glory departed till Gods anger accomplished.

But now let us in the second place, returne home, from *Iudah*, unto our selves, and lay it neere unto our hearts, considering wel, first, whether the Lord have not begun as sensible removals of all this glory even amongst our selves, in every one of these kindes, sundry wayes and at sundry times, proceeding by degrees. And whether he do not thereby threaten manifestly, that he is purposed utterly to remove, and to take away all his glory & his gratious presence from us, and to leave us to the will of our enemies, to be made a reproach & a shame when he is departed from us, unlesse we prevent and retaine him, by our speedy amendment. To begin & apply in order, as in the presence of the Lord: where is that delight of ours in most places, that we were wont to take in his word, our inciting and incouraging one another; *Come let us goup to the house of the Lord*: our talking of it, & our reioicing in it, as of our chiefe glory? Doe we not in stead hereof wax weary of it very generally, hearing it commonly for a fashion, or for

Application to our selves. Whether God threaten not us by as sensible removals.

1 Removing so generally our delight in his word.

Growing to be ashamed of talking of it.

satisfying of the law, or some like respect? Are we not growne to this passe, for the most part, to be ashamed of talking or reasoning of it? Yea, what is more common, than in stead hereof, to discourage one another from being forward in following after it, and those holy assemblies of his people, where he hath promised his presence for ever? Are not our people in stead hereof, set rather to flocke to all kinds of vanities, and places of the worst resort, to dishonor and provoke the Lord; even to those places, where is open profession of all impietie, and schooles of all lewdnesse and ungratiousnesse? Let the ordinarie frequenting of so many profane and lascivious playes fitter for Sodome, than the Church of God, be witnesse.

Flocking to all vanities.

2. Our sound knowledge of the word in many places. Amongst the people.

Where is that holy, sound, and powerfull knowledge of God amongst the people become, which in regard of the long and quiet time of the Gospell, that through the riches of the Lords mercy we have enjoyed, should have growne to ripenesse, that which was wont so to abound amongst us in many goodly Congregations, whereby the Popish sort were ashamed of themselves for their ignorance: specially (as was said) that love which hath beene so declared in hungring after the word, in delighting in it as our felicittie. Nay, what is become, for most part, of that singular commendation for readinesse in the Scriptures, and soundnesse of judgement in the word of the Lord, wherein many of our Gentry and chiefer sort in many places did sometimes excell; for which they were much to be commended; and indeed it was their dutie farre so to excell: for they of all other, have the most meanes, for all good helpes and leysure, to get the knowledge of the Lord; and also are most bound thereunto, for the abundance of Gods blessings, which they enjoy principally to that end, to *buy wisdome*, as *Solomon* saith? Whereas heretofore many of them were able to put to silence the proudest Papists amongst us, in displaying the abominations of Poperie, and in maintaining the Gospell of Christ, committed unto us in trust to that end, is it not to be feared, (our swaggering courses considered, and our generall neglect of religion) that we are in the greatest part by farre, become unable to maintaine the one, or to confute the other, or so much as to speake with any liv ely feeling of the truth of the Lord, or yet

Amongst most of our Gentry, having most meanes,

And most bound thereto. *Pro.* 17. 16.

All able formerly to silence the proudest Papist.

Now suffering the Popish sort to insult over us.

as

as having any sound love of the one, or dislike of the other. And how should it bee otherwise, when wee for most part give over our selves wholly to our pleasures with all licentiousnesse, or to follow after the honours and riches of the world; and which is yet farre worse, and more to be feared, (as an evident fore-runner of vengeance) when we are so generally ashamed to be noted, for being forward or zealous in the profession of the Gospell of Christ? On the other side, are not many of the Popish sort growne to be exceeding cunning in the mysterie of Antichrists iniquitie, and the depths of Sathan, whereby they deceive themselves, and others, (for that is all the glory that can justly be given them) seeing in the first principles of the knowledge of our blessed God, out of his heavenly word, they are commonly knowne to be farre more ignorant, than our little children, which are but catechized in the faith of Christ? Are not even ordinarily the simpler sort of them, waxen generally so perfect in the chiefe points of their religion, by their paines which they take (though alas to their perdition) for setting up the throne of the Beast againe, as that they are able therein to goe about the greatest part of the chiefe among us, and put us to silence? We can many of us be the best companions for them that may be, and can talke with them, of any matter of vaine pleasure and commoditie, and haply in scorning at all them, who shew any more love to the word, and more dislike of their abominations, than we doe; and who is so good a fellow, as one of them, though a deadly enemie to the Gospell, and all that sincerely professe the same; but hardly a word either for Christ and his truth, or against Antichrist and his iniquitie. Though we have as good cause to be armed against him, with all possible meanes, especially with the armour of the word of the Lord, as ever Nation had before, having had so many faire warnings from him. Oh that this may be well thought of, for sundry parts of our Land!

Chiefly thorow liuing in pleasure.

Popish sort growne cunning in their mysterie.

Though more ignorant than our children in the first principles of Christ.

Many of us good companions for them

But here it may be some will say: That there was never more knowledge in the Land. To whom I answer: Farre be it from me, from obscuring any gift or blessing of the Lord amongst us. Nay, I magnifie him for them: but that which I have spoken, hath beene of a sanctified and powerfull knowledge, wherein the

Objection for abundance of knowledge answered.

Rom. 14. 17.

the kingdome of God and our glory conſiſts, and that amongſt our people. And ſecondly, of ſuch I would demand, as before the Lord, whether in many a Congregation, there be not a ſenſible decay, as in all places where the meanes have failed; and for the reſt, what is our knowledge generally in regard of our meanes, and the long continuance of them? Have we not very many places, where within ſundry miles, there are not two to bee found in a Towne, which haue any ſound, ſubſtantiall, and ſaving knowledge, even of matters of ſalvation, and the wayes of God? And of thoſe who ſeeme to have knowledge, doe not many of them, as it were grope for the wall, like the blinde ſtumbling at noone day as in the twilight, making no conſcience at all of their wayes, no not of monſtrous ſins wherein they live, not fearing any judgement towards the Land or themſelves? Is not the very day darke over them (as we may ſo ſpeake) for ſeeing their owne ſinnes, or the fearefull ſinnes of the Land? And may not the Lord therefore as he threatneth, cauſe the Sunne to goe downe at noone, and darken the earth in the cleare day?

2. Holineſſe & ſubmiſſion to Chriſts Goſpel much removed

Falling daily to moſt horrible impieties and profaneneſſe.

Hence ſo many ſeparating.

Popiſh ſort blaſpheming.

And where is that holineſſe become, whereby the Lord ſhould be ſanctified of us, and honoured of all about us, with that obedience and ſubmiſſion to his moſt ſacred word? Are we not in very great numbers come to this paſſe, to make ſuch a fearefull revolt from all holy conſcience of our wayes (which many began to make) to open impietie and profanenes; as that certaine who were of us, have departed from us, although not without their owne fearefull ſinne in that behalfe. The old Serpent hath undoubtedly uſed this, as one firſt and principall provocation hereunto. Even the very diſhonors done to the Lords Sacred Majeſtie amongſt us, by our hainous ſinnes, and leſt they ſhould be polluted by our intolerable impieties, whereof they can ſee no hope of redreſſe; and alſo for feare of the vengeance of the Lord hanging over us for the ſame: whereby they have made a moſt grievous rent in the Church of God, to the indangering of their owne ſoules, and the advantaging of the bloudie enemie againſt us all, though they obſerve not ſo much. Doe not the Popiſh ſort blaſpheme the religion of the Lord eſtabliſhed among us for the extreme irreligiouſneſſe of the lives of too many of us? Doe

they not hereupon thinke, that no crueltie can be deviſed ſufficient for us, no not the butchering or blowing us up all at once? Though indeed, it be not our wickednesſe, which they ſo deadly malice, for therein many of them far ſurpaſſe us. Let Italie, and Spaine, be witneſſes hereof: for from them chiefly hath our iniquitie come, as will appeare hereafter: but it is Chriſt and his Goſpell, which they ſo maligne to the death. Doe not ſundry make freſh revolts unto them for ſome ſhewes of holineſſe, that are amongſt the devouter ſort, accounting it much ſafer to live in filthy Babylon, the cage of every uncleane and hatefull bird, under that abominable ſlavery and drudgery of Antichriſt, than to communicate with us at his table in the true ſervice of Ieſus Chriſt? Is not all true devotion waxen ſo odious amongſt very many of us, as that it hath beene thought ordinarily a diſgrace for the chiefer ſort, and men of note, to kneele unto the Lord in the congregation at the publike prayers? And muſt not their private devotion be ſutable in all reaſon? Though it be not or at leaſt have not beene any diſgrace for too many of them to kneele in the moſt reverend ſort, as doing a moſt ſolemne ſervice, though not to *Bacchus*, *Ceres*, and *Venus*, yet to their owne bellies. Certainely our Land of late yeeres hath beene grievouſly polluted herewith: whether it be yet left, or at leaſt repented of, I leave it to our conſciences.

Though it be not our wickednesſe they hate; but the Goſpell.

Sundry make revolts tothē. *Apoc.* 18. 3.

Our devotion waxen cold.

Is not the true practiſe of Chriſtianity, conſiſting in a holy endevour to walke conſcionably in every commandment of the Lord and in being zealous for his Goſpell, which is our chiefe honour, become far more vile and reproachfull (except in ſome ſmall remnant) than to live in drunkenneſſe daily, in ſwaggering and blaſpheming, in ſcorning and jeſting at all religion, and in making but a ſport of ſinne, namely of thoſe ſinnes, which are directly againſt the Lord in the firſt table? which yet will one day be found the moſt hainous and intolerable of all ſinnes. Yea, which may make the whole land to tremble; Hath not that glorious name of a Chriſtian become a nick-name and a name of reproach with too many? This was well beſeeming Italie and Rome it ſelfe, the throne of the Beaſt, as that worthie Doctor *Fulk* ſhewed long agoe; but for any of us to take it up from them, or for that it had beene abuſed by any, to uſe it

Practiſe of Chriſtianity more reproachfull than to live in any ſinne.

The very name of a Chriſtian become reproachfull to many.

A matter fit for Italy. *Rhemiſh Teſtament: Acts.* 11. *Sect.* 4.

it ſcornfully, and againſt thoſe chiefly, who moſt unfainedly beleeve, and ſhew forth the power of the Goſpell, this may make our fleſh to quake, and our very bones to ſhiver. And yet alſo to proceed a little further. Are not the lewdeſt commonly in credit and reputation for the only good-fellowes; but for a man to make conſcience to ſhun the forenamed and all other ſinnes, and not to runne with all ſorts to all exceſſe of vanity, doth not everie one ſee, that this is the only matter of generall obloquie? To come unto the Lords owne meſſengers, whom he hath ſent to us in kindnes and compaſſion, as *David* ſent his ſervants to the King of *Ammon*, and to the end that he might turne us from our evill way and ſpare us, if they be ſuch as are faithfull, as the Lords owne mouth, and will tell us of theſe and all other our ſinnes; who ſeeth not, (although they be never ſo formall) how welcome their feet are to all ſorts, who have ſet themſelves to run after Popery and all profaneneſſe, or to live in their evill courſes, though amongſt all the ſinnes of the land, there be no one, which the Lord can leſſe endure? Oh is this now become our thankfulneſſe to him that hath beene ſo kinde unto us, to be aſhamed of him, his word, meſſengers and ſervants, who notwithſtanding hath not beene aſhamed to countenance, and to ſhelter us, and who hath ſo honoured us before all the world in ſuch admirable deliverances, fighting as from heaven, for us unto this day.

Lewdeſt commonly in credit.

How welcome the Lords meſſengers are to the greateſt part. 2. *Chro.* 26. 16. 2. *Sam.* 10. 6.

Notwithſtanding his kindneſſe to us.

But to leave the Lords meſſengers, where is that unity become that hath beene formerly amongſt us, when diverſitie of judgement for ceremonies (which may fall upon the deareſt ſervants of the Lord) could not hinder our love and holy agreement in Chriſt? Did not all joyne cheerfully as one man, of one heart and of one ſoule, for the building up the Temple of the Lord? yea, were not thoſe moſt truly reverenced, who were the painfulleſt, faithfulleſt, and moſt powerfull builders, and all thoſe moſt rightly had in honor, who walked moſt conſcionably and uprightly in all the good waies of God, to the ſtopping of the mouthes of all the adverſaries? Hath not the glory of the Lord made a ſenſible remove in this behalfe? Let us ſee what we can anſwer him herein. Have not our diſſentions and our violent invectives, and courſes one againſt another, made not only the Lord

Our unity much departed.

Our reverencing the moſt painfull and holy much gone.

Fruits of our diſſentions.

Lord and his glory to be reproached, as if there were no unity nor certainty in our religion, and that therefore we are none of the Lords; but have they not caused moreover the enemie to insult over us, as now surely falling and overcome by our selues? And are they not heartened hereby to our destruction, when we have begun to fall by the hands of one another, and every one to make way for the common enemy to invade? And yet to proceed a little further; where is that countenance and love that was wont to be shewed to the lovers of the Gospell, even for the Gospels sake, which we professe? Doe not the Popish sort put us to continual shame herein, in shewing ordinarily more countenance and kindnesse to the most contemptible of their profession, the basest runnagate, or most ignorant priest, for their very religion which they professe, than wee commonly to the faithfullest preachers of the Gospell or the deerest seruants of the Lord, for the love of him and his most sacred truth? In a word, where is that submission in the greater sort, to yeeld to the word of the Lord, brought us by his messengers, for his honour whose message it is, and for the reverence of the word it selfe, being the eternall truth of Iesus Christ? Must not all needs acknowledge, that our glory is much departed in these respects?

To cause the Lord and his religion to be reproached.

The enemie to insult and bee hartned to our destruction.

Countenance to the true lovers of the Gospell gone.

Popish sort shame us herein.

Submission to the word much removed.

But to come to the third part of our glory; The Lords gracious protection. Hath he not sundry times threatned most manifestly the utter removing of it; so as all of us have oft feared, his finall departing and leaving of us? Most true it is, That never nation was either recorded, or heard of to have the glory of the Lord more brightly shining upon it, in admired peace, wonderfull deliverances and even miraculous overthrowes of the enemies and discoveries of their secretest plots, than England hath had. That we may truly say as the Psalmist did of *Iudah*, The Lord hath herein beene well knowne amongst us, his name hath beene great in England: yet we cannot forget how many a time the glory hath beene almost gone from us, and how certainly it had gone, if ever the bloudy Antichrist, or any of his marked souldiers had prevailed in any one of their desperate designes. Nor that it was ever more neerely gone from any narion, with whom it remained after, than it hath beene from us. Did not they themselves account all dispatched, and the glory quite removed,

3. Protection the third part of our glory, oft threatned to be removed.

As never nation had Gods glory more apparent in protection. *Psal. 76. 2.*

So never any from whom it was more nerely gone.

Accounted to be caried away in their navie invincible.

The generall feare for it when God should take away *Qu. Elizabeth.*

Other nations wondered.

We like them that dreame.

Our hearts filled with joy.

All our glorie ready to mount up at once in the powder furnace.

Rebels exalting themselves against the Lord as if it had been accomplished.

No policie could have prevented.

The Lord only prevented it by themselves, working on the heart of his Anointed.

moved, in their triumphs which they had for their Navie invincible; and that therein they should have carried all utterly away? Did not many an English heart tremble for feare thereof? And what could we looke for in all mans reason (considering their long threats and mischievous designes) when ever the eyes of our tender nursing mother should be laid, but either a finall taking it away, or a fearefull eclipsing or obscuring of it? What heart wished not, that it might never see that day? Did not other nations wonder at the most incredible inthronizing of our dread Soveraigne and Liege-Lord in such an unexpected peace? were we not all become as men that dreame, when the Lord so turned away our captivitie in a moment, even before it came. Could we for many dayes thinke that it was so indeed, or rather that we were but as in a dreame, untill that we perceived the Lord ratifying and confirming it, in so strangely continuing our admired peace, beyond all hope, and not a dogge to move his tongue against us? were not our mouths at that time filled with laughter, and our hearts with joy, for this so wonderfull a remaining of our glorie? In a word, as *Ezekiel* saw that the Cherubims mounted upwards and flew from the Temple, and from the midst of the Citie to the mount of Olives, as departing cleane away, so to demand of the conscience of the most notorious scorner, was not all our glorie ready visibly to mount upward from us at once? were we not, as it were, within a minute of the execution? nothing wanting in effect, but putting fire to the match to have blowne up and utterly carried away all our glorie? everie part of it altogether? did not our desperate rebels make their certaine account of it? did they not exalt themselves against the Lord of Hosts in it, as his vengeance taken upon some of the chiefe of them openly, did notably declare? could all the policie in the world have prevented it, or ever so much as have suspected such a hellish device, if our gracious God had not yet once againe from heaven, declared the riches of his glorie amongst us, and his pitifull compassion over us, and that in a more immediate and sensible working, than at all former times? when he first made themselves the beginners of this discoverie, and then so mightily wrought upon the heart of our Soveraigne Lord, casting such a carefull feare

upon

upon him, as that he ſuffered him not to reſt, untill he had diſcloſed it: yea, we may truly ſay in thankfulneſſe to our bleſſed God, that he never gave over, untill he had againe the ſecond time, wrought the deliverie and preſervation of *Great Britaine*, and of his Church, by the hand of his Royall Servant, and withall had granted the ſtaying of his glorie, that it ſhould yet remaine amongſt us: that thereby all our hearts might be more firmely linked to his Anointed, and unto his Seed for ever; and that we might all the dayes of our life, ſend forth more heartie thanks, and powre out more fervent and inſtant prayers, for his Sacred Majeſtie, and for all his Royall Progenie.

Not ceaſing untill our deliverance was effected againe.

To binde our hearts to his Majeſtie and his Anointed for ever.

What ſoule did not for the preſent extoll the Lord of glorie for it, as being his only worke? Who can be ſo void of ſenſe, or ſo brutiſh, as yet to have loſt the freſh remembrance of it? Or who can now here denie, but that this was firſt as ſenſible a danger and threatning from the Lord, to remove his glorie from amongſt us, as ever was in any Nation or Church, ſince the beginning of the world? Yea, who muſt not of neceſſitie be inforced to acknowledge, that this was as miraculous a ſtay, or rather a returne of the glorie againe, and withall as evident a forewarning of a finall departure, as ever was read or heard of before, unleſſe we doe yet ſpeedily humble our ſelves, and give him better entertainment. And to ſhut up this point likewiſe; what part have we now remaining of all the outward glorie, which they had not in the dayes of worthie *Ioſiah*, (the times being conſidered) or which they had not at the beginning of all thoſe miſeries following: which entred and ſeized upon them within three moneths after the death of holy *Ioſiah*; ſave only this one, That the Lord to accompliſh his worke on them, and to make a way to his wrath, ſuffred their *Ioſiah* to be taken in the nets of the enemie: whereas he hath ſo graciouſly, and above all former mercies, yet preſerved our *Ioſiah* unto us, when there was but a haires bredth betweene him, yea betweene us all and death: though yet of late he hath ſo fearefully ſhaken his rod in taking away that worthieſt hope, that ever our eyes did ſee before, and in whom we did ſo pride and ſecure our ſelves.

All did thus acknowledge it.

None can deny but that it was an evident warning of a finall departure, unleſſe we repent.

Our glorie as neerely removed as theirs in the dayes of *Ioſiah*.

Onely this is added to all our mercies, that our *Ioſiah* is ſtill preſerved from the bloudie enemie.

What we have done ſince in token of thankfulnes and humiliation, & in care to retaine him.

But alas, if our holy God ſhall now come and examine theſe things among us, what we have done ſince, in token of our thankfulneſſe

thankfulneſſe for this incredible deliverie, and for this ſo gracious a returne above all other, yea above all, that almoſt ever the world heard of; how we have demeaned our ſelves, in token of our unfeigned humiliation, for this ſo dreadfull a threatning of his departure? what deſire we ſhew to retaine him? how we extoll his great name for it, by advancing his religion, that he might be the better knowne and feared amongſt us? what zeale we ſhew to put out that execrable and murthering religion, with all the abominable impieties thereof: that which thus teacheth and inciteth men to expell the Lord and his glorie from among them, and withall to deſtroy all his people at once from the face of the earth? what greater hatred and deteſtation of it, is wrought in us, than heretofore? what can we anſwer to any one of theſe? muſt we not needs be compelled to lay our hand upon our mouthes, or rather to confeſſe, will we, nill we, That this is the humiliation and thankfulneſſe of the greateſt part amongſt us, that we doe many times more rebelliouſly lift up our faces, ſinning moſt impudently againſt his glorious Majeſtie, and ſo farre grieve and quench his Spirit, as that we ſeeke utterly to extinguiſh all feare of his name? And in ſtead of growing in deteſtation of that bloudie religion, for the utter rooting it out, according to the juſt indignation then preſently had againſt it, (as ſome good lawes thereupon provided, will ever witneſſe againſt us, to the end of the world) doe not verie many begin afreſh to grow in admiration of it, and to dote after it, and the profeſſors thereof, much more than before, caſting away the Lord and his truth? May not then the Lord moſt juſtly make a finall remove? May he not righteouſly forſake and leave us into their hands, as he left Iudah unto the Babylonians? May he not ſay unto his ſervants, when they are humbled upon their faces in ſecret, for theſe and the like tokens of his heavie diſpleaſure, and for thoſe who are inchanted, as by the Sorcerers of Ægypt, (ſo that they put their hands to the execrable thing;) as he ſaid to *Ioſuah* in the like caſe? I will not be with you any more, unleſſe you will give me my glorie; but I will utterly ſtrip you of all my glorie, taking away both religion and protection at once: I will leave you to be made a prey and a deſolation for ever, unleſſe you will ſearch out the execrable

What zeale & indignation we have ſhewed againſt ỳ murthering religion.

Our humiliation and thankfulneſſe in ſinning impudently.

To grieve and thruſt him out.

In ſtead of deteſtation, growing in admiration of Popery.

That he may juſtly reject us, & his ſervants praying for us, as he did *Ioſuah. Ioſ.* 7. 12.

He may forſake and leave us into their hands.

execrable thing, even all your abominations, whereby your have made your selves odious and execrable unto me, and unlesse you will doe your uttermost endevour to purge and clense your land of them all? Not only so many of us as run a whoring after Poperie, or favour it, but even all of us; for that through our generall negligence and securitie, it reviveth and groweth up againe so freshly among us, after he had given such just occasion to seeke to root it utterly out of our Land. Yea, after that he had so (above all former times) set before our faces, the cruell rage of that bloud-thirstie religion in the chiefe professors thereof, against his owne heavenly Majestie, his true religion and glorie, against his Anointed and all his Liege people, professing his name; to destroy all at once, though with the inevitable hazarding of themselves both soules and bodies, their owne native Countrey, their children and houses. And also after that he had caused us to beare such evidence against that Romish iniquitie, in those so good lawes then enacted against it, and as it were to give sentence upon it, having delivered it into our hands.

For suffering Poperie so to revive, & grow up amongst us againe; after he had given us so just occasion to seek to root it out utterly.

May he not justly say unto us all, even unto our whole Nation, for this verie sinne, as he said to the King of *Israel* for letting *Benadad* goe? when he spake thus unto him: *Because thou hast let goe out of thine hand a man whom I appointed to die, thy life shall goe for his life, and thy people for his people.* So may he not speake and threaten us much more; especially all of us, both Magistrates, Ministers, and people, into whose hands he hath committed the holy meanes to restraine and withdraw men from that murthering religion, so many wayes convicted and condemned, and to bring them to Christ? and principally, the spirituall meanes of the word of the Lord? Yea, above all other, may he not speake so to those, to whom he hath committed the charge of providing a holy, learned, and faithfull Ministerie, which may tenderly seeke the winning and saving of everie soule; and also of causing all sorts to submit themselves thereunto, as unto the Lords ordinance to that end: for these meanes are first and principally to be used in tender compassion; when as he hath so manifested the power thereof, by so much gracious experience in sundry worthy Congregations, where under such painfull and conscionable Ministers, the people have beene

1 *King.* 20. 32. Whether he may not say to us for this, as to the King of *Israel* for *Benadad.*

Chiefly for neglecting the holy meanes, whereby they might have beene converted and saved.

The meanes to be used for their salvation.

brought from Poperie and profanenesse, to embrace and obey the Gospell, so as hardly one Papist, or notoriously prophane or disordered person, have beene to be found there, but all cheerefully submitting themselves to the Gospell of Christ. May he not most righteously speake thus unto us therefore; Because through thy negligence and carelesnesse, thou hast suffered to grow up and spreade in the midst of thee, that execrable, bloudie, and Antichristian religion, (whereby my glorie is so desperately oppugned; whereby I my selfe am so openly sought to be driven out, and with so high a hand, the soules and bodies of all my people so endangered everie houre; yea, that which I put into thy power, and commanded thee to seeke by all holy meanes utterly to destroy out of thy land; that, against which thou hast so voluntarily made so good lawes, for the sure ratifying of the speedie execution of my Commandement) thy religion therefore shall goe for it, and all thy glorie shall be trampled under foot by them, untill thou know whom thou hast dishonoured and provoked hereby.

How God may righteously speake unto all for neglect hereof.

And to conclude this point. Hath not the Lord as good cause to complaine of us, and to plead against us, for the small account which we make of him, for grieving his Spirit, and driving him from amongst us, by this and all other our fearefull sinnes, as ever he had to complaine of the unkindnesse of *Iudah*, and even to take up the same complaint against us, which he did against them, when he spake thus unto them by the Prophet *Micha* before their Captivitie: *Oh my people, what have I done unto thee, or wherewith have I grieved thee? come testifie against me. Surely I brought thee out of the Land of Ægypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants: I sent before thee also Moses, Aaron and Miriam. O my people, remember now what Balak King of Moab had devised, and what Balaam the sonne of Beor answered him, from Shittim to Gilgal, that ye may know the righteousnesse of the Lord.* This is the Lords plea and complaint against *Israel* for their unkindnesse; calling the hils and mountaines to witnesse the equitie of it, before that he would depart from them, and bring upon them that strange and terrible judgement, which he so long before threatned by his Prophets.

Whether the Lord may not as justly plead against us, as against Iudah.

Mich. 6. 3.

This complaint set downe after.

But we will deferre this complaint against us, untill we shall have

have seene our iniquities to provoke and anger the Lord thereby, to be above the abominations of *Iudah*, considering that we live in this glorious light of the Gospell, with our extraordinarie mercies and meanes of all sorts. Because that then, if God shall give us hearts in reading to consider these things aright, we shall justifie the like complaint of the Lord against our selves, and shall admire his patient stay, and his abiding still amongst us.

Conclusion.

Thus much therefore shall suffice in like manner for this third cause, wherein yet let each of us aske of our owne soules; whether in such a decay both of the love of the truth, and also of holinesse, peace and unitie in the Church; yea, in such danger of our protection to be utterly taken away (to passe over, that it is so farre departed, That he that abstaineth from evill, makes himselfe a prey) and in stead thereof, in such an increase of Poperie, of licentiousnesse, and of all profanenesse, such an enmitie against all true pietie, with the insolencie of the enemie, the Lord doe not call loud upon us all, to watch and to pray for the severall removes of the glorie amongst us, and the evident tokens of the Lords threatned departure, which he sheweth in the same.

Chap. VI.

No priviledges can doe a people any good, if they increase in their iniquitie; but the moe their mercies have beene, the greater is their sin; and the heavier shall their iudgement be when it commeth, of what sort soever. And what causes we have hence to watch and to pray.

Vers. 4. *And the Lord said unto him: Goe thorow the midst of the Citie, even thorow the midst of Ierusalem, and set a marke upon the foreheads of them that sigh and cry for all the abominations, which are done in the midst therof.*

In the doubling of the speech, adding Ierusalem.

IN the doubling of the speech, *Goe thorow the midst of the Citie, even thorow the midst of Ierusalem*, where the Lord

addes *Ierusalem*, to make the speech more significant; not content to say, *Goe thorow the Citie*, but *even thorow Ierusalem*: He would have all to take notice; That though *Ierusalem* was the deareſt unto him of all the Cities of the world, yet having broken the Covenant on her part, and alſo caſt him off, and defiled his Sanctuarie, he will ſpare her no longer; he will have no more pitie of any, ſave only of his faithfull ones in her: But contrarily, he will forſake her, caſt her off, leave her to be deſtroyed, untill the remnant left of her, learne to ſeeke him, and to be reconciled to him againe. For the Lords ſpeech is thus much in effect: Goe thorow the midſt of the Citie, even thorow Ieruſalem, which though it be unto me the deareſt of all the places in the world, the Citie which I had choſen to dwell in for ever, and be as the ſignet upon my right hand: yet ſeeing it now caſteth me off, and deſpiſeth to heare my voice any longer, or to be reformed, I will not ſpare it, neither ſhall mine eye have pitie on it, ſave only of my remnant in it, but I will leave it to be deſtroyed and deſolate, at leaſt for ſeventie yeares. Whence the Lord would have all his people to learne, That no priviledges, promiſes, mercies, deliverances, no, nor any profeſſion of religion, can doe a people any good at all to ſecure them from his vengeance, if once they begin to caſt him off and his Covenant. But when they fall to be ſtubborne againſt him and his word ſent unto them in his mercie, he will caſt them off and leave them.

All to take notice, that God will not ſpare Ieruſalem, if it rebell againſt him.

Summe of the Lords ſpeech.

No priviledges can ſecure a ſinfull people from Gods wrath.

This alſo is a matter to be well thought of by us. Becauſe as they of Iudah were wont to ſecure themſelves in their prerogatives, even ſo doe we ordinarily. Firſt therefore to begin with them: Were not theſe and the like the things whereby they were wont to thinke themſelves ſafe, and to make their boaſt of ſo, that they could not repent? Sometimes becauſe they had the Lords Temple, of which they ſo gloried, ſaying, *The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord.* Sometimes they uſed to flatter themſelves, depraving Gods word, thus: *The Law ſhall not depart from the Prieſt, nor counſell from the wiſe, nor the word from the Prophet.* And commonly all ſinging this ſong, which their children learned of them, *We have Abraham to our father*: and by theſe and the like did they grow ſo extremely impenitent, that they could not be moved by any warnings.

Things wherein they ſecured themſelves.
The Temple. *Ier.* 7. 4.
The Law ſhould not depart from the Prieſt. *Ier.* 18. 18.
They Abrahams children. *Matth.* 3. 9.

And

And is it not even ſo with us; That whenſoever we are admoniſhed of the Lords anger, either by his word or judgements on us, or by any other ſignes or threatnings againſt us, to move us to ſeeke to pacifie his wrath, is not this uſuall with us to harden our hearts, and ſtill to lull our ſelves aſleepe in our ſecuritie, thinking that we are in no ſuch danger; and all for ſome ſpeciall priviledges, which we imagine that we have? Although it be acknowledged by all, that there are moſt grievous ſinnes amongſt us, yea, moſt horrible contempt of God, and his word, with dreadfull ſignes of his departing, and that we have had many ſtrange and terrible warnings, yet the Lord muſt needs ſtill continue with us, and there is no ſuch danger or cauſe of feare, as ſome imagine: and why ſo? Becauſe we have Gods true religion, eſtabliſhed by law, maintained by authoritie, and ſincerely profeſſed by many. The Lord hath alſo ſhewed us ſuch manifeſt tokens of his favour and love in our ſundry and moſt admirable deliverances: He hath taken ſuch vengeance on our enemies: He ſtill diſcovers and overthrowes their plots: And which is above all other his bleſſings, for that he hath given us ſuch a worthie Head and Governour, ſuch a hopefull Iſſue; ſo eſtabliſhed the Scepter, and concluded ſuch a peace with other Nations on everie ſide, as henceforth we cannot have any ſuch cauſe of feare, as formerly we have had. Are not theſe and the like, the things whereby we are commonly waxen ſo ſtrong and ſafe in our owne conceit? And are we not hereupon become ſo ſecure from any dreadfull judgement, as that no warnings from heaven nor earth, words, corrections, threats, nor yet any mercies can doe the greateſt part any more good, but that they deſperately proceed from evill to worſe, as though no hurt could come unto us.

Our cuſtome alike.

Priviledges wherein we ſecure our ſelves.

Gods true religion.

Gods favour manifeſted in our great deliverances.

Overthrowes of our enemies.

Prince and hopefull iſſue.

Let us to this end conſider a little of the priviledges of this Citie and people; and then if the Lord open our eyes we ſhall eaſily ſee, what cauſes we have of this our confidence and ſecuritie. Firſt for Ieruſalem; The Lord choſe it to dwell in for ever, and Sion to be an habitation for himſelfe; yea, he after a peculiar manner tied his reſidencie to that place; whereas now it is no more tied to any one place than unto another, but one Country now being unthankfull, he removes his Church and abode to another

Ieruſalems priviledges.

2 *King.* 23. 27.

Choſen to be the place of Gods reſidencie.

1 *King.* 8. His Temple there.

Prayers heard there chiefly. 1 *King.* 8. 14.

2 *King.* 8. 48, 49. Valley of viſions. *Dan.* 6. 10. *Iſa.* 22. 1.

All muſt pray for it. *Pſal.* 122. 6.

Perfection of beautie. *Lam.* 2. 15. Ioy of the earth. *Matth.* 4. 5. The holy citie. *Luc.* 19. 41. *Heb.* 12. 22. *Revel.* 21. 10.

The prerogatives of the people. *Rom.* 9. 4.

another. There *Salomon* by the appointment of the Lord himſelfe, built a houſe for his glorious Majeſtie, as the place wherein he would be ſpecially worſhipped, of all the places in the world. Such promiſes alſo were made by him unto that place, as never unto any other: That the people praying there (becauſe the Temple was a ſpeciall figure of Ieſus Chriſt) he would heare thoſe their petitions made in that place. Or when they could not come thither, if they did but turne their faces towards Ieruſalem in prayer, that he would heare their ſupplications made in faith and obedience, as he heard *Daniel* in the Captivitie. It was ſo famous for viſions and revelations of the Lord, by meanes of the Arke of the Teſtimonie there; the Prieſts with the *Urim* and *Thummim*; the Prophets and meſſengers of the Lord; that it was called the valley of viſions; yea, it was ſo farre preferred before all other places, as that all muſt pray for the peace of Ieruſalem. So that the Prophet *David* prayes for the proſperitie of all them who love Ieruſalem. It is called for the excellencie of it, *The perfection of beautie, The ioy of the whole earth:* and by our Saviour it is named, *The holy Citie:* and at that time, when it did grow towards the verie worſt, it was then ſo deare unto him, as that he wept over it to thinke of the ſinnes of it, with the miſeries that were to come upon it for the ſame. And to ſhut up this point: when our Saviour will ſet out unto the Church, the glorie of the kingdome of heaven, in the firſt flouriſhing eſtate thereof in earth, and fully in heaven, he findes no fitter reſemblance to expreſſe it by, than by Ieruſalem, calling it the *new Ieruſalem*, and *holy Ieruſalem*; becauſe *Ieruſalem* was the type thereof. Theſe are ſome of the priviledges of the Citie.

For the prerogatives of the people, they are farre more ſurpaſſing, if we will beleeve the commendations which holy *Paul* gives of them in the 9. chapter to the Romans verſ. 4. where he ſo highly eſteemes of them, that he could have wiſhed himſelfe accurſed, yea, caſt away utterly and ſeparate from Chriſt for evermore, from eternall joy to perpetuall miſerie, even for his brethren, that were his kinſmen according to the fleſh, if it had beene poſſible thereby to turne away the Lords anger from them and to reconcile them unto his Majeſtie againe; that ſo he might have beene glorified in ſaving of them. Theſe particular

ticular prerogatives are there moreover ascribed unto them.

1. They were Israelites, that is, A people descended of the most noble stocke of all the world; Israels posteritie who prevailed with God: descending lineally from faithfull *Abraham*, the father of all the faithfull, the friend of God, and with whom God entred into covenant, to be his God and the God of his seed for ever.

1. Israelites.

2. The Adoption belonged to them. God freely chose them, and them only of all the people of the earth to be his owne peculiar people. He carried them forth of *Ægypt* into *Canaan* the garden of the earth, as upon Eagles wings, plaguing Kings for their sakes, and expelling mightie nations to plant them in. Never ceasing untill he had setled them and his Tabernacle (the place of his rest) in this Citie. They were moreover so deare unto him, as that he cannot content himselfe to call them his sonnes, but he stiles them his first borne, his pretious ones in whom his soule delighted. So tender he was over them, as when he was compelled to chastize them for their stubbornesse, his soule was troubled for them as a deare father striking his childe with a heavie heart. And above all dignities, he cals them a thing hallowed; the first fruits of all nations unto him.

2. Having the right of Adoption.

Called of God his sonnes, his first borne, his pretious ones. *Ier.* 31. 20.

Ier. 2. 3.

Thirdly, the glorie belonged unto them, that is, the honour of all the earth. He gave them his owne name to call upon, and himselfe to be called their God. He vouchsafed them his presence to dwell among and in the midst of them: to shew unto them his glorious Majestie, by such visible signes, as never any other people saw: specially by the Arke, which was therefore called the glorie of God and the glorie of Israel: Yea, they had all that glorie spoken of before, belonging only unto them of all other people, both inward in his presence most sensibly, and also outward in knowledge, holinesse and protection, as we have heard.

3. Thirdly, the glorie was theirs.

2 *Sam.* 4. 22.

Their fourth prerogative was; That they had the covenant, that is, Gods covenant made with them in solemne words to be their God, and they alone his people, and *Canaan* to be theirs for an everlasting possession.

4. The covenant.

Fifthly, the giving of the Law was their prerogative. The Law of God was given unto them first and immediately upon mount Sinai out of the midst of the fire. The Lord there so

5. The giving of the Law.

ſpake to them as never people heard him. Beſides all their judiciall lawes whereby they were governed (paſſing *Solons* lawes and the lawes of all people beſides) were given unto them by the Lord himſelfe.

6. The worſhip theirs.

Sixtly, The worſhip was theirs: Gods owne true worſhip, according to his appointment to be performed by the Prieſts and Levites in a moſt excellent order, was committed unto them alone, which was continued for the outward manner and forme, though not without ſome corruptions, untill the verie time that this captivitie began: and yet the ſame corruptions alſo graciouſly reformed by that holy *Ioſiah*.

7. The promiſes.

Seventhly, The promiſes were theirs, both the promiſes of this life, and that to come were ſpecially and chiefly made to them, and to thoſe who ſhould joyne unto them.

8. The Fathers theirs.

Acts 3.25.

Eighthly, The fathers were theirs, thoſe chiefe Fathers of the Church, the ancient Patriarks, *Abraham*, *Iſaack*, and *Iacob*, to whom the promiſes were made firſt and confirmed againe and againe to thouſand generations. So that they might ſeeme the ſole heires of the promiſes, as they are called the children of the Prophets and of the covenants which God made unto the fathers.

9. Of them Chriſt came.

Ninthly, which is the chiefeſt and higheſt degree of all their excellencie, Of them Chriſt came, he was of their ſtocke and kinred. He who hath ſo honoured all mankinde in taking on him the nature of man, muſt needs honour them much more, with whom he entred into ſo neere a bond to be of their fleſh, even he who is God himſelfe bleſſed for evermore. To conclude all this their dignitie, The Lord had ſo preferred both them and their citie, and ſo declared his love unto them in his manifold and moſt miraculous preſervations and deliverances of Ieruſalem, that untill the verie time of this lamentable captivitie, neither the kings of the earth, nor all the inhabitants of the world, would have beleeved that ever the enemie could have entred within the gates of Ieruſalem. Thus have we had in ſome ſort the priviledges of the Citie and the people. Out of which we may moſt cleerely ſee, that if ever people might promiſe unto themſelves ſecuritie in regard of outward prerogatives, it was certainly they. Yet when they proceed ſo farre to

10. The Lord had ſo miraculouſly preſerved them as all thought Ieruſalem could never have beene invaded. *Lam.* 4.12. The Iewes if ever any had cauſes to ſecure themſelves in regard of their prerogatives.

diſhonour

diſhonour the Lord by abuſing his religion, which he had committed in truſt unto them alone to magnifie him by, and by committing all the abominations which follow after to make his name thereby to be blaſphemed among the heathen, and when all other his rods and meanes can doe them no more good to reclaime them and reforme them, he will ſpare them no longer. But when there is no other remedie, the deſtroyers muſt come, they muſt ſpare none, but execute the Lords moſt terrible vengeance, according to all that which in his law he had threatned long afore; for preſently within three months after the death of their worthy king *Ioſiah*, whom *Ieremie* ſo much bewaileth in his lamentations, calling him the breath of their noſtrils, began all thoſe plagues of this people. For *Iehoahaz* the eldeſt ſon of *Ioſiah* was taken captive of *Pharaoh Necho* and carried into *Egypt*, which could not be done without much bloudſhed. Their land alſo became tributary to the king of *Egypt*, and that tribute, which was very great, was to be levied upon every man of the land according to their eſtimation, whereby all of them became ſervants unto him. In the place of *Iehoahaz* did the King of *Egypt* ſet up *Eliakim* his brother, whom he named *Iehoiakim*. So he and his people remained ſervants to the king of *Egypt*, untill they were ſoone after conquered againe by the King of *Babylon*, who prevailing againſt the king of *Egypt*, they all became tributaries to the king of *Babylon*. Afterward *Eliakim* rebelling againſt *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*, *Nebuchadnezzar* came againſt him with great power, tooke him, bound him with chains, caried him into *Babel* with many of the veſſels of the houſe of the Lord. In his place did the king of *Babel* ſet up *Iehoiakim* his ſon to reigne in his ſtead, who reigned but three moneths, but he alſo is caried away into *Babylon*, with other precious veſſels of the houſe of the Lord, and *Zedekiah* his uncle ſet in his place; who rebelling in like manner againſt *Nebuchadnezzar*, (who had cauſed him to ſweare by God) and not humbling himſelfe at the commandement of the Lord by the Prophet *Ieremie*; but hardning his necke and making his heart obſtinate that he might not returne to the Lord God of Iſrael, the chiefe alſo of the Prieſts and of the people ſinning wonderfully and not harkening to Gods meſſengers, he likewiſe was taken, his

Yet comming to a height of impietie. *Deut.* 28. 58. 63. There is no further remedy but deſtroyers muſt come.

2. *King.* 23. 31, 32, 33. Their miſeries begin within three moneths after *Ioſiahs* death.

2 *King.* 23. 35. But ceaſed not till the deſolation accompliſhed.

2. *King.* 14. 26.

2. *Chron.* 36. 10.

2. *Chro.* 36. 12, 13.

his ſonnes ſlaine before his eies, his owne eies put out, he bound in chaines and caried into *Babel*, and all this deſolation foreſhewed was fully accompliſhed.

The cauſes of the captivitie, not the ſinnes of a few yeeres, but many of them committed long before 2. King. 21.15, 16. 2. King. 24. 3,4. & 21.15,20. 2. King. 23.26. 2. King. 21. 17. 2. Chro. 34.27.

All this came upon them, as the Lord himſelfe ſaith plainly, partly for the ſinnes committed long before the daies of *Ioſiah*, even ſince their comming out of *Egypt*, and more ſpecially for their provocations wherewith *Manaſſes* the grandfather of *Ioſiah* had provoked him by al his Idolatry, and by the bloud of his ſervants which he ſhed, whereof the land was not yet purged; though that bloud had beene ſhed threeſcore yeeres before, beſides his ſinne wherewith he made *Iudah* to ſin and to doe evill in his ſight. And yet more alſo, for that in *Ioſiahs* daies the peoples heart did not ſo melt for thoſe and the like iniquities, as *Ioſiahs* heart did, but they rather ſtill approved generally of their former evill waies and practiſed them ſecretly. And laſtly, becauſe of theſe abominations following, whereby they filled up the meaſure of their iniquities, and againſt which the Prophets ſo cried out, ever threatning this judgement for the ſame untill it came upon them.

Our principall prerogatives whereupon we ſecure our ſelves: And are made unthankfull.

But here it may be ſaid, howſoever theſe prerogatives of theirs were indeed exceeding great and may aſtoniſh us all, both in regard of our former hainous ſinnes and the judgements that have beene vpon us both formerly and of late, with the unplacable rage of our adverſaries; yet we have many things which may ſeeme to aſſure us of Gods favour, and ſecure us from any ſuch judgement or the like.

As firſt (which was ſhortly touched) for that we have ſo many worthy preachers and good people unfainedly fearing the Lord. Secondly, that we have the Lords true religion ſo ſoundly maintained. Thirdly, all open Idolatrie baniſhed. Fourthly, ſuch good lawes ſo religiouſly eſtabliſhed. Fiftly, for that more than all theſe, we have the Lords Anointed ſo graciouſly and miraculouſly ſet over us in peace, with ſuch a happy unity concluded with all neighbour nations, and alſo ſo bleſſed an iſſue. Sixtly, Aboue all theſe, The Lord hath ſo often teſtified his fatherly love and care for us, in ſuch tender and marvellous preſervations, both of our Princes and of our whole nation, and in ſo bringing his and our enemies to ſhame, as he hath hereby

made

made this Iland the wonder of the world. And lastly, for that never nation did enjoy the Gospell so long in that flourishing prosperitie and peace, which we have done; All these and the like are such evident tokens of the Lords favour and love towards us, as that we can have no such cause of feare, as this forewarning and many of our Preachers would beare us in hand.

To answer all these and whatsoever else can be said to secure us; Let us but consider, what King reigned in *Ierusalem*, and how many yeeres together before this Captivitie, even when these judgements were so threatned and hastned on, and when many of these abominations following were cõmitted, and how he continued till within three moneths of these miseries begun, as we heard before: and it will appeare most like, that this people could not be then inferiour to us in any of these signes of Gods favour, except this, that we live in the daies of the Gospel; to which we shall answer after. For first immediately before this vengeance began, they had that most holy King *Iosiah*, whose praises and worthy example shall remaine unto the end of the world; and him they enjoied, reigning in peace over them, for one and thirtie yeeres together. And secondly, for puritie of religion, we know that never King went beyond *Iosiah* in his reformation and care, compelling all strictly to serve the Lord according to his word; and in taking away so farre as he was able, the very monuments of Idolatrie, with all things that might either revive it openly or secretly; or that might be any way a snare unto the people. And also how he reformed all other abominations, that could be espied in all the land of *Iudah*, or in *Ierusalem*. So as the Holy Ghost beares this witnesse of him, that like unto *Iosiah* was no King before him, that turned unto the Lord with all his heart, nor rose up after him: That for puritie of religion, and a holy reformation, we can make no doubt but they were equall to us.

And for worthy Teachers according to that time, I take it, that we can make no question, but that they had many of the Priests and Levits both learned and godly, when the king himselfe was so forward to incourage and provoke them thereunto. Besides those famous Prophets stirred up by the Lord extraordinarily, as *Ieremie*, *Zephanie*, *Habakuk*, and others, with *Esay*,

Answer to our securing upon our prerogatives.

Iudah in the beginning of her miseries nothing inferiour to us in such prerogatives.

1
They had that holy King *Iosiah*.

2
Puritie of Religion.
2. *King.* 23. 3, 4, 5, 6. & 12. 24, 25.

3
All abominations reformed.

4
Worthy teachers according to that time.

Esay and *Micha* but a little before, for many yeeres together, and *Ezekiel* presently after. All these and sundry others they had, howsoever they dealt most unkindly with them, as *Ieremies* example doth fully witnesse.

5 Many good people.

Isai. 8.18.

For good people in like manner, it cannot be imagined, but that where such a worthy head and example was, with such excellent Teachers, there must needs be also many of the children which God had given to them; and those of all sorts, even of the chiefe Magistrates, as well as others. Such were these which mourned in Ierusalem for the abominations, who are commanded to be marked, who lived when they were at the very worst, and sundry Worthies, as those which spake for *Ieremie*, and others, which were caried away in the Captivitie; yea, even children of the Kings seed, and of the Princes, as *Daniel* and his companions, to wit, *Hananiah*, *Mishael*, *Azariah*, with others, as wee shall see hereafter. Though these were and had long time been made as signes and wonders unto the rest, and the off-scowring of all other, like as those Prophets were whose doctrine they obeyed.

Dan. 1.3,4,5.

Isai. 8. 18.

6 All open Idolatrie and the monuments thereof taken away.

2 *Chron.* 34.33. 2. *King.* 23.1,2, 3. 25.

As for Idolatrie; It is most evident, that they had none openly in all *Iosiahs* daies after the reformation; nor so much as the prints suffred to remaine, nor any thing that might revive it, as we saw, but only that they had not repented of that which had beene before.

7 *Iosiah* had peace with all about him.

2. *Chron.* 35.20, 21, 22.

And for peace; It seemeth to be manifest, That *Iosiah* had peace with all about him: for although he was slaine in warre by *Pharaoh Necho* King of Egypt, it was his owne seeking, and a just punishment for attempting it, and not consulting with the Lord, nor hearkning to the words of *Necho*, which were from the mouth of God. For the King of Egypt sent messengers unto him, to tell him that he came not against him, but against the house of his enemie, which was the King of Assyria, and therefore he would not in any case have foughten with him. If the Assyrian had beene *Iosiahs* enemie, it is not like that *Iosiah* would have hindered the King of Egypt from fighting against him.

8 Iudahs security then in regard

And finally for their securitie through their Prince and princely progenie, if ever Nation could glory therein, it was surely they, having, as was shewed, as worthy a King as ever

was,

was, by the Lords owne record: whom they therefore accounted the breath of their noſtrils, and ſuch a goodly tree as under whoſe ſhadow they were ſafe in the midſt of the Heathen, as they mourne after in the Lamentations. This their good King had alſo ſundry ſonnes and ſonnes ſonnes, as may appeare in the hiſtorie alledged before.

of their Prince and princely progenie. 2. *King.* 23. 25. *Lament.* 4. 20. 2. *King.* 23. 24.

As for Godstender love and care ſhewed for us in our continuall preſervations, and in all our former deliverances, the abuſe of them cannot but increaſe the wrath againſt us, conſidering our grievous unthankfulneſſe. Beſides that they had alſo then as juſt cauſe to boaſt hereof, as we have now, or much more, both in that continuall preſervation of their Land, through a feare caſt on their enemies, that none durſt invade them, ſo long as they obeyed the Lord in any good ſort, (of which we ſpake) and by their great deliverances, as that in the daies of *Ezechiah*, and others mentioned.

9 Miraculous preſervation.

Whereas this may be yet further imagined, for our vaine ſecuring our ſelves, that we live in the daies of the Goſpell, wherein the judgements of God are more ſpirituall, and therefore having received ſo many ſtrange deliverances, it is more like that he intends to puniſh us more ſpiritually; which is indeed the heavieſt judgement of all other. We anſwer; That true it is, That we may as yet certainly expect an increaſe of the ſpirituall judgement of blindneſſe of minde and hardneſſe of heart, to fill up the meaſure of our iniquities, and to make the condemnation of all the reprobate and our plagues the more juſt thereby; yet theſe things following ſeriouſly thought of and well weighed, with the former, may cauſe us to dread ſome temporall plague, and that heavier than al which have gone before. As firſt the outward and temporall judgements which God hath beene wont to bring for the contempt of the Goſpell; like as in the laſt finall deſtruction and ſcattering of this Nation of the Iewes over the face of the earth after the preaching of Chriſt and his Apoſtles: and ſundry other, where the Goſpell hath come, as the judgements accompliſhed in removing thoſe ſeven golden Candleſtickes of *Aſia*, and in many other famous Churches, with the afflictions upon them; which muſt needs be very grievous in all reaſon, before the Goſpell could be utterly taken away. And

The Goſpell contemned can be no freedome from a temporall ſcourge.

Witneſſe temporall judgements on ſundry Churches and Nations.

Apoc. 2, 5, 10, 22, 13, & 2, 10, 16.

ſecondly,

2. Our neerenesse to such scourges, besides what we have felt.
3. That we have had all the forerunners of it.

secondly, if we call to minde, how many forewarnings we have had of such a sharpe scourge; and withall how often it hath beene so neere to our backs.

Thirdly, that we have had (as I take it) all the forerunners of the greatest temporall calamitie, which is the very sword it selfe. That we have felt both dearths and pestilences, and also heard the cries of the poore for mercilesse oppressors, ravening and devouring almost in every part of our Land. Besides the taking from us so many of the royall issue, and principally Him, upon whom all the eies of our Land were bent, for continuance of our shelter, yea of our life and all our blessings: to cause all the godly to droope in fearing continually some greater judgement, and giving all the enemies such cause to lift up their heads afresh, as now expecting their day againe.

4. The implacable malice of enemies, with al the subtleties of hell.

Fourthly, the implacable malice of our bloudie enemies against us, either to destroy us utterly, or to bring our Nation by strong hand under that Babylonish yoke againe; which cruell rage of theirs doth threaten such a plague every houre, but that the Lord in mercie stayeth it.

5. We cannot be more secured that our land is as yet purged of the Idolatry and blood of his servants, than Ierusalem in *Iosi hs* daies. 2. King. 21. 15, 16.

This, fiftly, may terrifie us all, so oft as we thinke of it; for that as I take it (under submission to better judgements) we cannot be any more assured, that our Land is as yet purged more of the abominable Idolatrie committed in former times, and of the bloud of Gods servants, the faithfull Martyrs of Iesus Christ in the daies of Queene *Marie*, with innumerable moe abominations committed both before and since, and increased also to this day to anger the Lord, than *Ierusalem* was in the daies of *Iosiah*. If God remembred against *Iudah* all the Idolatrie, bloodshed, and other like abominations of former daies, and in the day of his visitation visited them for all, what can we looke for, or how can we secure our selves?

God purposing to remaine with us, must needs deale as a kind father to bring us to obedience.

And yet above all these, That if the Lord doe love us, and purpose to continue his religion and presence with us, (as we have great cause of hope that he doth) then he will deale with us as kinde and wise fathers are wont to doe with their disobedient children, he will double and treble his fatherly strokes upon us, untill he amends us and makes us stoope to him. He hath already corrected us very sharply, with all his other rods,

over

over & over, and continually one or other upon our backs, and most thicke of late time; whence we must needs expect a more sharpe scourge to awaken and amend us than any of the former, or than all of them together. And what can that be, we take not upon us to divine. But let every one bethinke himselfe, and looke into the booke of God, and he will easily see by the course of Gods former proceedings, what cause we have to feare: especially, if the same abominations be found amongst us, or rather greater than these, for which the Lord threatned, and brought this wofull judgement: for if he spared not the naturall branches then, neither will he spare us now, being but wilde Olives, and having so farre greater light than they, and other meanes to reclaime us. And therefore this is our lesson in this our day, and left to admonish us now, as it was given first for them.

Rom. 11. 21. *1. Cor.* 10. 11.

This our lesson now.

For other prerogatives; If any can be found wherein we doe excell them, they will but rather serve to increase and hasten our judgement. As the Gospell, for example, offering more grace and power of obedience, must needs more kindle the Lords wrath. Because so many of us making profession of it, doe yet denie the power thereof, so farre as that we make the very enemies to blaspheme, and doe moreover proceede not onely to hate, but also to scorne all who labour to bring forth the fruit of it by a holy conversation. For as it is with the most gracious and munificent Princes, that they will shew most severitie to such of their Subjects, whom no patience nor benefits can winne, but that they rather wax more rebellious by the mercy and bountie of their Prince: so we must know certainly, that it is with the Lord, that his mercies so abused, must needs provoke him to the heavieſt indignation: which if it be but the removing of our candlesticke, how dreadfull it is; yea, whether it be not far worse than any bodily plague, let all the wise-hearted judge.

Other prerogatives more increase the wrath; as the Gospell for our denying the power of it. *Tit.* 1. 16. *2. Sam.* 12. 14. *Isai.* 52. 5 & 59. 15. *Ier.* 15. 10. & 20. 7, 8.

As the grace of a Prince abused. *Rom.* 2. 24.

The removing of our Candlesticke the heavieſt judgment.

Thus much likewise for this point: That no favour or priviledges can give any securitie to a sinfull people, professing Gods religion, if they beginne to cast off his yoke, and to wax worse and worse, to make his name to be blasphemed; but the moe their priviledges are, the greater is their sinne, and the more grievous their punishments shall be. And secondly,

Conclusion.

what

what cauſes we have hereupon to give our ſelves more inſtantly to watching and praier, for the innumerable mercies and priviledges beſtowed upon our Land on the one ſide; and the increaſe of our ſinnes, with the tokens of Gods vengeance, and our deepe ſecuritie on the other ſide. Leſt our plagues doe prove greater than the plagues of all other people, as much as we ſeeme to have beene lifted up above moſt, if not all others, in bleſſings, in this laſt and moſt ſinfull age of the world, if all our bleſſings temporall and ſpirituall be compared together and conſidered aright. Oh Lord, at length open our eyes, and then we ſhall ſo cleerely ſee our eſtate, that it will not be any more needfull to cry unto us to awake, to watch and to pray.

Mat. 11. 21, 22, 23.

Chap. VII.

The marking of the godly: that is, How Gods owne people are marked in the midſt of the greateſt confuſions, before the deſtructions come, and what cauſes every one hath to watch and to pray, that he may be ſo marked.

Vers. 4. *And ſet a marke on the foreheads of all that mourne.*

The Lord hath ever a ſpeciall care of his in the greateſt confuſions.

IN this Commiſſion to the marking Angell to ſet a marke on the foreheads of all that mourne; The Lord giving ſuch a charge to his holy Angell thus carefully to preſerve his choſen from this deſtruction; to goe thorow the Citie, and ſet a marke upon every one of them, to overpaſſe none: and alſo the deſtroying Angels to follow after the marking Angell, ſo as they hurt none, till all the faithfull be marked, he would have all to know thus much: That he never caſts off the care of his people, no, not then when all things ſeeme moſt confuſed in the earth. And ſecondly, when they are ſo mingled amongſt the wicked, as that they can hardly be knowne amongſt themſelves, much leſſe to the eies of the world, that yet he ſtill tendreth them, and watcheth over them continually.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, that he wil at length make his fatherly care and watchfull providence knowne unto them, and that by ſome gracious and wonderfull deliverance, even in this world, if it be ſo beſt for them and for his glory. And laſtly, that they evermore muſt be ſurely marked before the deſtruction come. The Lord hath beene very carefull to ſet downe this point alſo moſt clearely, in every of thoſe great deſtructions, which are recorded in Scriptures, for examples and warnings to all poſteritie: That hereby his owne faithful ſervants may receive comfort againſt the greateſt afflictions that can come upon the world.

1. At the floud. *Gen.* 11.16.

As firſt in that terrible over-flowing in the generall deſtruction of the old world. The waters came not untill *Noah* had firſt prepared and finiſhed the Arke, and alſo God himſelfe had ſhut up both him and his in the ſame; ſo locking and ſealing up the doores with his owne hand, as that all the waters, rage they never ſo horribly, and hoiſe him up above the higheſt mountaines, yet cannot hurt him. And why dealeth the Lord thus carefully with *Noah*? *Thee* (ſaith he) *have I ſeene righteous before mee in this generation*: that is, I have ſeene thy heart ſincere, and thy purpoſe and indevour ever to pleaſe me; not following the courſe of the times, but crying out of the iniquitie thereof, beleeving my threatnings, and preparing the Arke according to my commandement, to ſave thy ſelfe and family from the vengeance to come. *Hebr.* 11.7.

2. At Sodomes deſtruction. *Gen.*19.16.

Secondly, in that dreadfull overthrow of Sodome and Gomorrha, before the fire and brimſtone came upon thoſe filthy Cities, *Lot* muſt not onely be marked, but alſo gotten forth ſafe from the deſtruction. The Angels have ſuch a charge of him, as that they get him by the hand, pull and hale him for haſte, being farre more carefull for him, than hee is for himſelfe, and they never leave him, till they have ſafe conducted him out, and then bid him hie for his life, get him into Zoar. They tell him plainly, that the Lords care was ſo great for him, that they can doe nothing in this deſtruction, their hands were tied, untill he be there ſafe out of all the danger. The reaſon of it alſo is carefully ſet downe by the Lord himſelfe, why hee accounted him worthy to eſcape; for that he was a juſt and righteous man, grieved with the uncleane converſation of the wicked, his 17.22. 2 *Pet.* 2.7,8.

righteous ſoule was vexed from day to day with all their abominable deeds.

3. Before this deſtruction. *Jeremie* and ſundry of thoſe who favoured him. *Ier.*40. 2,3,4.

Thirdly, before this deſtruction the Lord foretold to *Ieremie* particularly, That he would give him his life for a prey, in all places whereſoever he came, becauſe of his faithfulneſſe in ſticking to his Word and Commandement, and for his warning the people. And ſo indeed it came to paſſe, that the Lord did not only preſerve him with ſundry others fearing his name; but gave him alſo ſpeciall favour, in the eyes of the enemies, who led them captives. So that *Nebuchadnezzar* himſelfe gives charge to *Nebuzaradan* his chiefe Steward, to looke well to *Ieremie*, to doe him no harme, but to doe for him as himſelfe would; whether to goe home with them into Babylon, and there to receive kindneſſe, or to tarrie ſtill in the Land of Iudah with the people, which ſhould be left there behinde. And this mercy did the Lord ſhew not only unto *Ieremie*, but unto others alſo that had beene kinde unto his Prophet: As to *Ebedmelech* the Ethiopian, who had ſpoken for *Ieremie* to the King of Iudah, to get him out of the dungeon: to whom alſo the Lord gave his life for a prey, becauſe he put his truſt in the Lord. And *Gedaliah*, whoſe father *Ahikam* had formerly delivered *Ieremie* out of danger, and from the rage that was againſt him, hee is made Governour of them that remained in the Land, howſoever he was trecherouſly ſlaine not long after. So to *Baruch* in like manner, who was *Ieremies* Scribe, and had ſtucke ſo cloſe to him in all his troubles; God promiſeth to give him alſo his life for a prey in all places whereſoever he came. We have likewiſe the enſamples of *Daniel*, and of his three companions, called the three children; unto whom, beſides their preſervation from the common deſtruction in the firſt Captivitie of Babylon, the Lord granted that extraordinary favour, both to be brought up by the King of Babylon himſelfe, and by his ſpeciall appointment, in all excellent learning, and ſo farre to ſurpaſſe all others, as to be moſt meet for their ſingular knowledge and underſtanding, to ſtand with high favour in the preſence of that mightie Monarch, though otherwiſe a cruell oppreſſor of the Church of God, who had carried them away captive. He gave unto them moreover divine teſtimonies of his fatherly care and protection,

as *Ebedmelech*. *Ier.*38.8. to 13.

*Ier.*39. 16,17,18. *Gedaliah*. *Ier.*39.24. & 48. 5. & 26.24. *Baruch*. *Ierem.*45.5.

Daniel and his companions. *Dan.*1. 3, 4. 6. 7. *verſ.*5, 6, 9. 13, 15, 17.

*Dan.*3.27.

protection, in the preſence of all his enemies, in thoſe miraculous deliverances out of the fiery furnace, and from the Lions den, becauſe they did cleave ſo faſt unto the Lord, that they would not ſuffer themſelves to be polluted with the leaſt part or ſhew of the Idolatrie of the Heathen. The like favour for preſervation he granted to *Ezechiel*, and ſundrie others.

Dan. 1. 8. 6. 22. So to *Ezechiel* and ſundry others.

And to omit all other examples; At the laſt and finall deſolation of this Citie and Nation by the Romanes; Hiſtories doe report that preſently before the taking of Ieruſalem, a voice was heard among the Chriſtians, *Goe forth to Pella, Goe forth to Pella*, which ſo ſoone as ever the Chriſtians had done, and that they were ſafe there, the Citie was ſacked, and all that deſolation fully accompliſhed, as was declared before.

The Chriſtians before the laſt deſtruction of Ieruſalem.

God thus providing to ſet them ſafe before the deſtroyers came. Whereby wee may ſee evidently both by the teſtimonies and charge of the Lord himſelfe, and the continuall examples, that the faithfull ſervants of God, cleaving firmely unto him, in the back-ſliding of the reſt, have the only immunitie and priviledge, above all others, to be preſerved at ſuch times, ſo farre as ſhall be any way good for them; and ſhall be withall, for the Lords owne glory, and the ſalvation of his people.

To confirme us yet further in the aſſurance hereof, and to ſtirre up our hearts, ſo to walke with our God, before that time doe come, we have the Lords moſt gratious direction and promiſe made to the Prophet *Eſay*, and to the godly of his time, teaching them how they ſhould cary themſelves in ſuch outrage of iniquitie, and in ſuch ſignes of the approaching of his vengeance. He hath cauſed it to be written for a moſt comfortable preſident to all ſucceeding ages, and for a ſure preſervative againſt all feare of every ſuch danger. It is therefore carefully to be marked of all his ſervants. The Prophet ſaith, That the Lord ſpake unto him in taking him by the hand, as it were incouraging and ſtrengthening him, and thus he taught him. That they ſhould not walke in the way of that people, nor have a confederacy with them, nor feare their fear, no, nor yet be afraid of them: that is; He would be a place of refuge and comfort unto them againſt all terrors, as the Sanctuary was. And by the Prophet *Ezechiel*

For aſſurance hereof we have the Lords promiſe and direction. *Iſai.* 8. 11, 12, 13.

How to behave our ſelves in ſuch times as that we may be ſure to have the Lord a Sanctuary to us in all places. *Ezech.* 11. 14. 16.

Ezechiel he addes, That he would be thus unto them, in all the places whereſoever they ſhould come.

Obſerve how the godly are excepted in the greateſt denunciation of vengeance. *Ezech.* 14.14. 16.18, 20.

Laſtly, beſides this gracious promiſe, we are to obſerve, how in the moſt terrible denunciation of vengeance againſt this people, that God would not ſpare them, for the greatneſſe of their iniquitie, no, *though Noah, Iob, and Daniel were amongſt them*, yet alwayes this exception is added and carefully recorded by the Spirit of God, That they, to wit, *Noah*, *Iob*, and *Daniel*, being amongſt them, *Should yet deliver their owne ſoules by their righteouſneſſe*. And againe, *They only ſhal be delivered themſelves, but the land ſhall be waſte*: So the point is moſt cleere from the Lords owne warrant.

Let us now conſider the reaſons of it to ſtrengthen us yet further againſt the time of temptation. A principall cauſe hereof is, The Lords moſt fatherly and tender love towards theſe. That howſoever they are unto the world men moſt odious and monſtrous, for that *they will not runne with the reſt to the ſame exceſſe*, as the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeakes, and becauſe they by their holy profeſſion and cariage condemne the world as *Noah* did in his age, by his preaching and living and making of the Arke, yet are they unto the Lord as deare as the apple of his owne eie. That he cannot poſſibly forget them, whereſoever they be diſperſed and howſoever. No, though it were poſſible for the mother to be ſo unnaturall as to forget the childe of her wombe, yet he cannot forget theſe. They are graven on the palmes of his hands, and are ever in his ſight. His mercy is about them in the greateſt diſtreſſes, as a wall of fire to fence them, and to conſume all contrary violence, ſo far as he ſeeth beſt. And as chariots of fire to carry them ſafe out of all ſuch dangers, yea, to ſave and deliver them in the midſt of the fire and in the midſt of the water. And therefore when the day of the Lords vengeance commeth, thoſe who formerly thought on his name, and ſpake to keepe others from the wickedneſſe of the times, are taught to comfort themſelves herein, becauſe *they are written in the booke of his remembrances*, as *Malachi* ſpeaketh. They are indeed the *Lords true flocke*: and then will he declare it openly; *ſparing and tendring them as a father doth his owne ſonne in whom he is delighted*; that men may oftentimes plainly diſcerne *betweene the righteous and betweene the*

Iſai. 8.18.

1 Pet. 4.4.

Zach. 2.8.

Iſay. 49.14, 15, 16.

Iſa. 43.1-3.

Mal. 3.16, 17, 18.

wicked,

wicked, betweene him that ſerveth God, and him that ſerveth him not, as we ſaw in all the former deſtructions. And finally, for their ſakes it is why hee ſpares a ſinfull Nation ſo long. But if they be once forth, the reſt can looke for nothing but fearefull execution of vengeance, for then he bids, *Smite and ſpare none*, as followeth. *Iob* 22. 30.

But here it will be ſaid, If this be ſo; How commeth it to paſſe, that many of the godly doe ſo oft feele the ſmart of ſuch calamities as well as the reſt? As it is very cleare; That many of the deare ſervants of God were carried away in this and the former captivitie as well as others: even many of thoſe who were marked; as we heard before. That the Prophet himſelfe was caried away in the former captivitie, as alſo *Daniel* and his companions, with many other, and ſo were partakers of the common miſeries of the captivitie with the reſt. It is likewiſe very probable that ſundrie of them died by the ſword of the enemie, and ſome by other calamities. And on the other ſide it is certaine, that many of the wicked eſcaped amongſt the godly. It may be therefore demanded, what this marking did then ſtand the godly in ſtead, or what they were better for it.

Obiect. The godly oft feele the ſmart of ſuch calamities as well as the reſt.

To this it may be anſwered, Firſt, That this is very true, that many of the godly doe often feele the ſmart of ſuch generall judgements. And that moſt juſtly for ſundry cauſes, for which God threatneth, and is wont to correct his deareſt ſervants. As either for their former ſecuritie, or elſe for ſeeking their peace carnally, by faſhioning themſelves unto the evill times, as the greateſt part is wont to doe ever, ſo far as poſſibly they may, not falling utterly from God. Or for that they have not mourned for the abominations of the reſt. Or in that they have not beene ſo inſtant with the Lord, for paciſying his wrath and turning away the judgement as they ought. Or for neglecting their duties of Magiſtracie, miniſtrie, government in their families; or at leaſt of admonition, exhortation, or example for ſaving the reſt, and ſtaying the courſe of ſinne. Or finally, for that they have not been ſo faithfull in all things, in their places and callings as they ſhould: or for ſome other their ſcandalous ſinnes, or for ſinnes againſt conſcience, wherby they have provoked the Lord againſt them: for he uſeth to correct ſuch, and other ſinnes like to theſe

Anſw. Why the Lord oft lets his feele the ſmart with the reſt. *Apoc.* 2. 4. 5. 15, 16, 20. & 3. 19.

in his owne ſervants, by heavie and ſharpe temporall ſcourges, and ſometimes by death it ſelfe. Thus he ſhewed his diſpleaſure againſt good *Ioſiah* for thruſting himſelfe into battell without warrant. And againſt *Moſes* for not ſanctifying his name at the waters of ſtrife. Among the Corinthians alſo for their unreverent receiving the Lords Supper. And thus may hee ſuffer his owne deareſt ſervants, to endure the common calamities with the reſt at ſuch times, either for a juſt correction of their former ſinnes, as hath beene ſhewed; or only for the triall of their faith and conſtancie, or for an exerciſe of their faith and repentance, and to make them more fervent in prayer, or to further their ſanctification to conforme them more and more to Chriſt; or it may be to increaſe the vengeance againſt the enemies through their crueltie againſt them, or ſome other like cauſe, as we ſhall ſee more after.

2 *Chro.*35.21, 22.
*Num.*20.12.
1 *Cor.*11.30.
*Apoc.*3.14.

What the marking profits Gods ſervants ſuffering with the reſt.

Yet nevertheleſſe, The marking teacheth us thus much, that though ſuch goe into Captivitie, yet there the Lord will be with them, his holy hand will there be over them as a buckler; There he will ſo protect them, that hee will turne all the evils that come unto them, ſtill to doe them good. Hee will thereby further their ſalvation, and increaſe their glory in the heavens. And when they are killed all the day long, and accounted as ſheepe for the ſlaughter; yet in all that which they endure, they are more than conquerours, through him who hath loved them. He chaſtiſeth them thereby, to make them to walke more holily and more humbly in his preſence; and ſo teacheth them more ſound obedience by the things which they ſuffer, than ever they learned in all their lives before, that they ſhall in time acknowledge, that to have beene the beſt ſchoole that ever they came into. By this fire he fineth them from much of the droſſe of their ſinnes and corruptions, and ſpecially of their unbeleefe, to make them to come forth more pure, than the gold. For firſt, he at ſuch times taking from them the meanes and ſtayes, that they were wont to leane upon in their proſperitie, maketh them to ſee their carnall and vaine confidence, upon what props they formerly relied, and what unbeleefe is in their hearts. And then raiſing up for them ſuch meanes as they never knew (as hee did for his people Iſrael in the wilderneſſe, and in other their diſtreſſes)

Iſay 43.12.3.
41.8,9,10.
*Rom.*8.28.
*Rom.*8.36,37.
*Heb.*5.8.

ſtreſſes) hee teacheth them to looke up higher than to earthly meanes; even to his owne heavenly hand to depend upon him for all, and to give him all the glory, making him their only ſtay and comfort. At ſuch times and in the very greateſt extremities, hee hath ever beene wont to reveale himſelfe farre more familiarly to his, in the gratious workes of his fatherly providence and extraordinary fauours, than ever in former time, and that even outwardly in things belonging to the neceſſitie and comforts of this life. But above all for the inward comforts of his Spirit, ſupporting and chearing up the hearts of all his elect, they ordinarily finde then more true and heavenly joy with certaine aſſurance of Gods favour and love in Chriſt, than ever they felt before. And hereby doth hee moſt fully manifeſt to the very enemies their faith in his promiſes, their patience, hope, obedience, love to his Majeſtie, and what they are readie to ſuffer for his name. Hereby he is wont alſo to kindle in his people a greater fervencie in prayer, ſmiting them to the end to prepare their hearts thereby, that hee may incline his eare unto their cries. To make them able in all things to give thankes and to reioyce in their moſt grievous afflictions; and ſo to be able to ſing with a holy melodie, when the fetters are about their feet. Hee waines them from the earth, and makes them long after the heavens, to be ever in his preſence, where all teares being wiped away, is fulneſſe of joy for evermore.

Pſal. 10. 17. *Pſal.* 107. 5, 6. 11, 12, 13. 17, 18, 19. 1 *Theſſ.* 5. 16, 17, 18. *Acts* 16. 24, 25. & 26. 19.

Hee then alſo uſeth theſe his poore ſervants, as a ſpeciall meanes of the converſion and ſaving of the reſt of his elect, and in theſe to reſerve a holy ſeed, by which to renue and inlarge his Church againe.

Eſai. 6. end.

And which is well worthy our carefull obſervation: Some, who could never attain to any grace at all, under the beſt means, in the dayes of their proſperitie, but did runne riot, as the prodigall ſonne, being moſt rebellious againſt the Lord and his word: yet when hee hath brought them into the fetters and chaines of afflictions, then have they ſet themſelves to ſeeke him; and then the word which before they deſpiſed, hath begunne to worke in them to life.

God hereby workes grace in ſome who could never be moved by other meanes.

A notable preſident of his mercy herein he hath cauſed to be regiſtred in his Booke, for all poſterity, even in *Manaſſeh*, who though

2 *Chron.* 33. 1, 2, 3.

though he had so good a Father, as that worthy *Ezechiah*, and was so vertuously brought up; yea, and had seene his fathers reformation, yet (as the Holy Ghost saith) *he went backe and builded up that iniquitie which his father had destroyed.* Hee never had grace to bethinke himselfe, nor to hearken to the word of the Lord, untill hee brought upon him *the Captaines of the hoast of the King of Ashur, who put him in fetters, bound him in chaines, and carried him to Babel. But when he was in tribulation, he began to seeke unto the Lord his God, and humbled himselfe greatly before the God of his Fathers, and so God was intreated of him, heard his prayer, and brought him againe into Ierusalem into his Kingdome. Then* (saith the Holy Ghost) *Manasseh knew that the Lord was God:* and then he destroyed all the Idolatry and abominations, which hee had beene the cause of, and restored that Religion, which he had before defaced. And to shut up all: By these the Lord doth exceedingly advance his owne glory in the midst of his enemies; as here he did by *Daniel* and his companions, and makes himselfe and his truth evidently knowne by their constancie, and leaves the wicked enemies the more without excuse.

verse. 20.11.12.

The state of the godly, whom God takes away at such times.

As for those whom hee takes away by death in such times, their death is unto them but as the gate of life. It is a finall deliverance from all their sinnes, and from all feare of every kinde of enemie and miserie. It is unto them a more speedie entrance into the full possession of their Fathers joy, and of their glorious inheritance, than otherwise nature would have afforded them. And thus much for the godly which goe into Captivitie, or fall by the sword, or endure any calamitie with the rest; what the marking availeth them; how happie their estate is, whatsoever come to passe.

State of the wicked in such calamities. *Amos* 9.4.

But on the other side; for the wicked, who in such generall calamities escape the sword, or the like cruell death, it is cleane contrary with them: For the Lords anger and revenging hand ever followeth them, whithersoever they goe, untill they be destroyed from off the face of the earth. All these miseries are but the beginnings of the powring out of the Viols of Gods wrath upon them, to the increase of their torment, and their fearefull expectation of further vengeance. Their calamities

which

which they endure, are nothing else but preparatives and forerunners of the damnation of hell.

Hereby they also become more senseless and impenitent; they waxe more hardned and enraged to murmure and blaspheme against the Lord. And ordinarily they are alwaies chased in their owne consciences, as *Cain*; having a sound of feare in their eares; the worme beginning to gnaw, and their sinne to sting them to the very hearts; and consequently to become runnegates to the grave, and to eternall confusion. Or let the best be supposed, that ever can befall any of them; they are but in a lethargie or sleepie sicknesse, without sense, untill the vengeance of God light wholly upon them, to send them to the place of their destruction, where they shall never finde any rest after. But for their wretched estate, we shall see it further in another place. And thus we may behold the estate of all both good and bad in such generall calamities. Now who is there that beleeves the word of the Lord, whom the due consideration of this one point alone, must not needs drive to watching and prayer; and to cause him to seeke to be prepared aforehand in these daies of our peace, that he may be thus undoubtedly marked, and under this protection: yea, that he may be thus hid in the evill day, and finde all the comforts belonging to the godly; and that he may be sure to escape those certaine and dreadfull miseries of the wicked, what judgements soever it shall please him to exercise us withall: for *A wise man* (as *Salomon* saith) *foreseeth the plague and hideth himselfe; but a foole goeth on still, and is punished.* *Conclusion.* Prov. 22.3.

This therefore may serve as a first cause to enforce us all to betake our selves more instantly to watching and prayer, than ever we have done, if we would be so marked, as to finde the Lord to be a Sanctuarie, and a hiding place unto us in the evill day; how soone soever he shall bring it upon us for all our sinnes and provocations; and in the meane time, to get boldnesse thereby, and peace of conscience, against all assaults whatsoever. And more also, unlesse we will strip our selves wilfully of his most gracious providence and protection, and desperately expose our selves and all ours, to all kinde of miserie and unhappinesse, both in this life present, and that which is to come.

If

What the mark was wherewith the godly were marked.

If any shall demand further, what this marke was; we must remember; That this Vision was given according to the capacitie of man, to shew this unto the Prophet, that he might make it knowne to all sorts, what care the Lord hath for his faithfull ones in the greatest confusions, and when they seeme to be utterly neglected and forgotten; and to this end he hath caused it to be written for us. This moreover seemeth evidently to be an allusion to the custome of men, who use to set a marke on such things as they have a speciall care to preserve heedfully. Or rather an alluding to the marking of the houses of his owne people in Egypt, with the bloud of the Lambe, that the destroying Angell might not touch any of them, when he destroyed the Egyptians. Or else at least to the marking of *Rahabs* house in the Citie of Iericho, before the destruction came, for the saving her selfe and hers.

Exo.12.22,23.

Iosh.2.18.

Quest.

But if it be demanded, whether they had not indeed some speciall marke of difference to be discerned from the rest: we may answer truly; That there is no question, but they were marked indeed both inwardly and outwardly: Inwardly, by the bloud of Christ sprinkling them, and by the Spirit sanctifying them, making them to cry Abba oh Father: Outwardly, by a bold and constant outward profession of the truth of God in word and deed; and more specially by mourning and crying out, for all the abominations, which were practised daily to anger the Lord, as followeth after. But this is not that marking here spoken of, much lesse is it any marking with any outward marke or signe, as some doe vainly and very fondly conceit; but only to make them sure, that they might be preserved from the destroyer. The words signifying nothing else, but marke them with a marke or signe them with a signe. That is, marke them surely and carefully, doubling the word, according to the manner of the Hebrew phrase. And thus much also shortly for answering those doubts. Now to our next cause, which every soule hath, to watch and to pray.

They were marked both inwardly and outwardly.

What ỻ words signifie. *Ezech.9.4.* התויתתו

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

The propertie of the godly living amongſt the wicked, in a ſinfull age, is; To ſigh and cry for the abominations and tokens of Gods anger. So what cauſe all Gods ſervants have to watch and pray for the fewneſſe of ſuch, and to labour to be of that little number.

TO proceed to a ſixt cauſe, which yet more neerely concernes each of us, and cals on us all to watchfulneſſe and prayer. We are all, who deſire to finde true aſſurance and comfort, to conſider, who and what ones theſe ſervants of God are, which are thus marked. They are deſcribed in theſe words, *which ſigh and cry for all the abominations.*] They were thoſe who were ſo far off from framing themſelves to the wickedneſſe of that evill time, as that they contrarily abhorred, with a vehement indignation, all thoſe ſinnes, whereby Gods anger was ſo kindled, and their deſtruction haſtned ſo faſt: Inſomuch as that thereby they did not only mourne in themſelves in ſecret, but being inforced with a zeale of Gods glory, and indignation againſt all the abominations, cried out againſt them, according to their places and callings, and ſighed in ſecret for mercy and redreſſe.

Who are they that are marked, *viz.* the mourners.

Here we muſt obſerve, The Lord ſetting before our eyes the condition of the true children of God living in evill times, and amongſt a people void of the ſenſe of ſinne, and of the feare of Gods judgements; That their manner is not to approve of the wicked waies of the ungodly, much leſſe to ſooth and flatter them in their evill courſes, nor to give over themſelves to any jollitie or carnall delights, as others doe; but they uſe to have continually much heavineſſe in themſelves, ſighing for the grievous ſinnes which are committed. An example hereof the Lord hath ſet forth to all poſteritie in holy *Lot*, who living amongſt the filthy Sodomites, was thus grieved with their ungodly converſation; for ſo ſaith the holy Apoſtle *Peter*, *That he being righteous and dwelling among them, in hearing and ſeeing vexed his righteous ſoule from day to day, with their unrighteous deeds.*

The condition of Gods children living amongſt the wicked, to mourne & cry for all the abominations.

As *Lot.*

2 *Pet.* 2. 7.

He

He was so disquieted with their beastly manners, provoking the Lords most holy eies, that his whole life, for the time that he dwelt amongst them, was but wearinesse and a continuall mourning. This holy man, the Lord would have set forth as an example to all succeeding ages, to shew the condition of all his true and faithfull servants, living amongst wicked and ungodly men. To him we may adjoyne that faithfull Prophet *Ieremie*, who though he lived in a farre better time and place, both in the bosome of the Church, and in the daies of that holy King *Iosiah*; yea, and in that worthy reformation for many yeeres together, (for he began to preach unto them in the thirteenth yeere of *Iosiah*, and so continued untill this Captivitie was brought upon them) yet he likewise is vexed continually, even from the beginning of his prophesying. This was a daily corosive to his soule, to see the people so backward in embracing the truth, so senslesse and impenitent in their sinnes, in such evident tokens of Gods vengeance rushing upon them, so prone to the former Idolatrie, wherein they had lived, and to all other abominations, to anger the Lord, notwithstanding the example of their most worthy Prince, and all the meanes used to reclaime them. This made his very soule to faint within him, and his heart to tremble, that no admonitions of his, nor of other the holy Prophets, could doe them any good, although they daily discovered their iniquities, and so proclaimed this desolation. That beholding this and seeing that now there was no more hope, but that their plagues must needs breake in violently upon them, he wisheth his head full of water, and his eies a fountaine of teares, that he might weepe for them day and night, and for all the miseries that were to come upon them. And moreover desireth that he had (if it were) but a poore cottage of a wayfaring man in the desolate wildernesse, to live all alone, and never to heare of their sinnes, nor to see their wicked conversations any more.

Ieremie.

Ier.9.1,2,3.

More than this, we may also observe, how carefully this is recorded in the Booke of God. That divers of his most faithfull servants, hearing of some hainous sinnes committed, to his dishonour and provocation, and considering the judgements due thereunto, or foreseeing by evident signes some present

calamitie

calamitie haſting upon them for the ſame, have beene ſtrangely humbled thereupon: yea, how they have wept, prayed, faſted, lyen downe on the ground, and could not be comforted. Beſides *Moſes*, who was ever thus humbled upon the new provocations of the people, and with him *Samuel*, *David*, and others; ſee *Ezra* his behaviour, how he rent his clothes, pluckt off the haire of his head and of his beard, ſate aſtonied, got privately into his chamber, faſted, neither eating bread, nor drinking water, mourning, becauſe of the tranſgreſſions of them of the Captivitie, and fearing ſome new wrath to come upon them. This cauſed him to be caſt downe in himſelfe, when he heard of the ſtrange women, which Gods people had maried in the Captivitie, contrary to his law; how they had mingled themſelves with the prophane Heathen, which were given to all abominations, whereby their children began to prove heatheniſh alſo; and becauſe the Princes and Rulers had beene chiefe in this treſpaſſe. And not onely he himſelfe, but the people likewiſe, fare trembling for thoſe and other ſins, and for a grievous raine, which God had ſent upon them at that time, as an evident token of his diſpleaſure.

Moſes. *Ezra.* *Ezra.9.1 & 10.6.* *& 9 2.* *& 10.9.*

So holy King *Ioſiah*, when he heard the words of the Booke of the Law, which was found, laying to heart the threatnings in it, and conſidering thereupon the wrath kindled againſt them, for their owne ſinnes, and for the ſins of their fathers, he mourning thus humbled himſelfe, rent his clothes, his heart did melt, his eies powred out teares. Hee ſends ſtraight way to inquire, where he could have any anſwer, even of *Huldah*, becauſe he knew that ſhe was a Propheteſſe of the Lord: with which fact of his, declaring his unfained humiliation, the Lord was ſo pleaſed, that he ſends him this meſſage; That *his eies ſhould not ſee the vengeance, which he would bring on that place. He ſhould firſt be taken away in peace, before thoſe plagues came.*

3. *Ioſiah.* *2 King.22.11.* *verſ.19.* 13. *2 King.22.19,20*

Our Saviour alſo himſelfe, foreſeeing the laſt deſolation of this Citie, and yet beholding the people ſo ſenſeleſſe in the midſt of the imminent danger, when his preaching will doe them no more good, he ſtands and weepes over them thus lamenting: *Oh, if thou hadſt knowne, at leaſt in this thy day, thoſe things that belong vnto thy peace! But now are they hid from thine eyes;*

4. Our Saviour. *Luc. 19. 41, 42, 43.*

eyes; for the daies shall come upon thee, that thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compasse thee round, and keepe thee in on every side, and shall make thee even with the ground, and thy children which are in thee, and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone, which shall not be cast downe, because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation. And for continuall mourning for this, the holy servant of God, *Paul*, cals Christ to witnesse to his soule, that he had a continuall heavinesse & sorrow in his heart, for his stiffe-necked and unbeleeving Countrymen, the Iewes. And that he could have wished himselfe separate from Christ, so that they might not have beene cast off, from being any more a nation, or the people of the Lord.

5. *Paul.* *Rom.* 9.3.

Finally, the two Prophets in the Revelation, representing all the true and faithfull Preachers of the Gospell in the last age (even these daies wherein we live) are set out unto us cloathed in sackcloth, after the manner of mourners, bewailing the strange delusions of the people of God, by the abominations of Antichrist, in so cleare a light of the Gospell of Christ, shining againe so gloriously.

6. The two Prophets in the daies of Antichrist. *Apoc.* 11.3.

And thus have we seene plainly, this propertie of Gods people, how they use to sigh and mourne for all the iniquities of the times wherein they live.

Now to ascend to the next degree of the griefe of the godly for the wickednesse of the times, the Prophet saith, That they sigh and cry, not only that they sigh, but sigh and cry for all the abominations.

The godly wont not only to sigh, but to cry out for the abominations of the wicked according to their calling.

Wherein the Holy Ghost would have all to take notice, that the godly at such times, have beene so farre off from bearing with the wicked, or flattering them in their sinnes; as that from mourning, they have come, in a zeale of Gods glory, and in an holy indignation against sinne, to cry out openly against the grievous corruptions and transgressions; and have shewed thereby their detestation, so farre as their calling would any way suffer them; especially, when the provocations have beene hainous to anger the Lord. To omit the boldnesse of the young Prophet sent to *Ieroboam*, and of *Eliah* to *Ahab* in the case of open Idolatrie: this was the continuall course of these three worthy Prophets, *Esay*, *Ieremie*, *Ezechiel*, and so of the rest that lived

as *Esay.* *Ieremie.* *Ezekiel.*

lived before the Captivitie. Thus God bids *Esay* to lift up his voice as a trumpet, to tell his people of their transgressions. And this was *Ieremies* usuall tenour, for which all his hatred and troubles came upon him, with earnest contention to cry out against the fearefull sinnes of his time. These God hath left as presidents to all his faithfull messengers to the end of the world, to declare how they ought to carry themselves in such evill times, according to their places and callings. So *Iohn Baptist* cries out against the hypocrites: *O generation of vipers, who hath forewarned you to flie from the vengeance to come.* Our Saviour also among the Scribes and Pharisees, being hypocrites, thunders out nothing, but *woe, woe.* This in like manner was the principall occasion of all the malice against him; for that he testified in every place, that their deeds were evill; and also for denouncing Gods judgements to come upon them.

And to omit all other: That righteous *Lot* in Sodome, though a private man, yet cries unto them for that shamefull outrage, *I pray you, my brethren, deale not so wickedly.* In a word, this hath beene the continuall behaviour of the Martyrs and Confessors of Gods truth, (as all Histories doe witnesse) thus to cry against the sinnes of the times, within the limits of their calling; whence ordinarily they have suffred such bitter persecutions.

For crying also unto the Lord at such times, it hath beene a most usuall thing with all the faithfull Prophets and other of his servants, untill that he have forbidden some of them, as he did *Ieremie*, that he should not pray to do that people any good, when as they did grow obdurate and most extremely malicious against him: and alwaies the neerer they have seene the wrath, the more vehemently haue they cried unto the Lord, as *Moses* and *Samuel*, stepping into the breach to stay the Lords hand, that he should not destroy his people.

So that this point is likewise most cleare. Yet to cause it to worke more effectually upon our consciences, it shall not be unnecessary, a little to ponder some of the reasons, why the godly doe so sigh, and cry. As

First, for that they, who are the Lords indeed, doe specially resemble their heavenly Father, in hating those things which he

*Esa.*58.1.

John Baptist. *Matth.*3.7.

Our Saviour. *Matth.*23.

*Mat.*21.45,46. *Iohn* 7.7.

Lot a private man. *Gen.*19.6,7.

The Martyrs & Confessors.

The godly have bin wont also to cry to God in such times. *Ier.*7.16 & 11. 11 & 14.11.

*Psal.*106.23. 1 *Sam.*7.8,9,10.

Reasons why the godly so sigh and cry for all the abominations.

1.

Hating that which God hateth.

he hateth, with a vehement indignation; and what sins they cannot reforme, nor restraine, those they sigh and grieve for.

2. That they cannot indure the dishonours done to him.

Secondly, that they can no more endure the dishonors done unto his heavenly Majesty, according to that measure of grace given unto them, than the Angels which are in heaven, doe according unto theirs; and therefore they being subject unto these passions of griefe and sorrow, must needs in seeing and hearing vex their righteous soules continually.

3. The spirit of zeale in them. *John* 2.17.

Thirdly, because they have of the very same spirit of zeale that was in our Saviour, which was so fervent towards his fathers house, that to see it defiled, it did after a sort eat and consume him.

4. Because of Sathan set up in Christs throne.

Fourthly, how can it be, but that they who are the children of God, must needs be troubled to see sathan set up and worshipped in the throne of their heavenly Father? for so he is in all places where iniquitie hath the upper hand. Or what childe is there, except he be extremely unnaturall, that is not cast downe in himselfe, when he seeth his father angry?

5. For that they are otherwise guiltie of the same sinnes. 1 *Cor.*5.2. 2 *Cor.*7.11.

Fiftly, because not taking to heart such sinnes, we become guilty of them: for so *Paul* chargeth the Corinthians for the incestuous person, that they were therefore guilty of his sinne, because they had not sorrowed for it: and saith, that they afterward by their sorrow and indignation, testified so many waies, upon his letter sent unto them, did shew themselves free from his wickednesse.

6. For that for one notorious sinner unpunished, all the place is in danger of Gods wrath.

Sixtly and lastly, which is the principall; because for the sinne of one notorious offender unpunished, Gods anger may be kindled against all the place where he is; and that therefore all of them are in danger of the vengeance with the rest; even every one that doth not what he can within the compasse of his calling to reforme it; at least by mourning for it, and crying unto the Lord for pardon and redresse. This he shewes plainely in sundry places of his holy word, although the contrary practise of the world, declares evidently that very few beleeve this point. Let us but observe two or three places, the more to convince us and rouze our soules out of this our deepe securitie. As first, that of the case of inquisition for murder, when one is found murdered, if there be not the utmost endevour,

Evident in the law of inquisition for murder.

both

both in Miniſters, Magiſtrates and people, to finde out the murtherer, and to puniſh him by death (according to the Law againſt murther) the Land is defiled, as is evident both by the ſtrict manner of the inquiſition, that was to be made, by all the people of Iſrael, and by the proteſtation of the Rulers in the behalfe of all the people, clearing themſelves from it; and alſo by the prayer, that they were taught to make in this forme; *O Lord, be mercifull unto us thy people Iſrael, whom thou haſt redeemed, and lay no innocent bloud to the charge of thy people Iſrael, and the bloud ſhall be forgiven them.* So (ſaith hee) *thou ſhalt take away the crie of innocent bloud from thee; when thou ſhalt doe that which is right in the ſight of the Lord.* Whereby we may plainly ſee, that the bloud of one man thus murthered, defileth the bordering Land, and provoketh the Lords diſpleaſure againſt the people; if it be not carefully ſought out, and all holy meanes uſed for the avenging of it, and taking away the crie thereof. Secondly, the Lord declares there evidently, that the Land cannot be cleanſed, and the ſin pardoned unto it, but by the bloud of him that ſhed it; or at leaſt, when no meanes is neglected, to finde it out and to puniſh it. Thirdly, that innocent bloud cries for vengeance from the earth continually, as *Abels* did, untill all the meanes be uſed for purging it.

Deut. 21. 1,2,3, 4, &c.

verſ. 8.

verſ. 9.

Num. 35. 33,34.

A laſt reaſon of Gods ſeveritie is; becauſe it is not with the Church of God, as with the prophane Heathen; for he dwels in the midſt of his Church, and therefore if any defile the Land, where his Church is, he will either puniſh them ſeverely, or utterly depart from them, as appeares evidently in his threatning after the making of the golden Calfe: for hee will be ſpecially ſanctified in them that draw neere unto him, in ſuch a holy profeſſion. He is very terrible in the aſſembly of his Saints. Now, as it is in this caſe of bloud, ſo every notorious ſinne defileth the Land, and crieth for vengeance againſt all the inhabitants: the Land cannot beare it, but will endanger all, even to ſpue out that people in the end, if it be not purged, as their abominations did cauſe the Land of Canaan.

God is more ſevere with his Church than any other. *Numb.* 35. 34. *Exod.* 32. 33. *Levit.* 10. 3. *Levit.* 18. 24, 25, 27, 28. *Levit.* 20. 22, 23, 26.

Every notorious ſinne defileth the Land, to make it ſpue out the inhabitants, as *Canaan.*

This wee may ſee in ſundrie examples, how ſometimes the ſinne of ſome of the people hath endangered all the reſt; ſometimes the ſin of one city, and ſomtimes even the ſin of one man; when

The ſinne of ſome few may indanger all.

1. As for the golden Calfe.

2. The feare of Iſrael at the erecting the Altar of witneſſe. *Ioſ.* 22. 28.

verſ. 28.

3. The vengeance on Gibea, and all the Tribes of Benjamin. *Iudg.* 19. 25. & 20. 13, 14.

On Iabeſh Gilead for not helping to avenge the wickedneſſe. *Iudg.* 21. 4.

The very ſinne of one alone may indanger all, as *Achans*. *Ioſh.* 7. 12.

Sauls in murdering the Gibeonites. 2. *Sam.* 21. 1, 2, 3. *Ioſh.* 3. 16, 17. 2 *Sam.* 21. 1, 2. 6. 14.

when it hath not beene ſought out and puniſhed. As to omit that ſinne at the making of the golden calfe, which although it was not the ſinne of all, yet it endangered all. See the feare of the people of Iſrael, for the ſuſpition of the provocation, by the two Tribes and the halfe in the erecting of the Altar of witneſſe, which the reſt of the Tribes did thinke that they had done for ſacrifice, contrary to the commandement of the Lord. They all purpoſed to have gone immediatly to make warre againſt their brethren for the puniſhment of that ſinne; yet ſent meſſengers to know the truth of the matter before, with this meſſage, That if they did rebell againſt the Lord that day, the morrow next he would be wrath with all the congregation of Iſrael. The like we may behold in the feare of the people for the villany committed by ſome of the inhabitants of the Citie of *Gibeah* in abuſing the *Levites* Concubine, and the vengeance that came not only upon the City wherein it was committed, but alſo upon all the Tribe of *Benjamin*, becauſe they delivered them not to be puniſhed, but would ſeeme to defend them, for as much as they were a part of their Tribe. And not upon that Tribe alone, which might ſeeme juſtly acceſſary; but alſo upon all thoſe who helped not to take vengeance for that wicked fact; as on all the inhabitants of *Iabeſh Gilead*, becauſe they came not to the warre to ſee Gods judgements executed upon thoſe wicked men.

To come to the ſinnes of particular men. Did wee not heare before of the vengeance on Iſrael in the dayes of *Ioſhuah* for the ſinne of *Achan*? How that worthy Captaine with his valiant ſouldiers were not able to ſtand before their enemies, untill *Achans* ſinne was found out and puniſhed? Yea, the Lord tels them, he will not be with them any more, unleſſe they deſtroy the excommunicate from amongſt them: which thereupon they were glad to doe. And farre be it from us to thinke the Lord to be unjuſt in this, or any other of his judgements, or to have diminiſhed any part of his juſtice or holineſſe unto this day. Secondly, we cannot forget that anger that was kindled againſt Iſrael, and the famine that came upon them in the dayes of *David* for three yeeres together, for the ſinne of *Saul* in killing the *Gibeonites* to gratifie the people, contrary to his fidelity: though they were but Heathens of the curſed *Amorites*, and had dealt deceitfully

deceitfully with the Israelites in making their covenant: Yet the wrath could not be appeased or the Land purged, untill vengeance was taken upon his bloudie house for that murther committed so long before. And therefore sith his anger may breake forth so long after, even for such sinnes, much more for such notorious abominations as are committed daily by them, who have given themselves over to all manner of prophanenesse and impietie; and whereof they can have no such colour or occasion.

Gods anger oft breakes out long after, for sinnes committed long before.

This was the chiefe reason of the solemne inquisition, which was at the publike fasts in Israel, for the finding out both of notorious offenders and offences, to have vengeance taken of them openly. Hence was the pretence of *Iezabel* against *Naboth*, under a shew of execution of this justice against a blasphemer, to pacifie the Lords anger. This also seemes to have beene one principall cause, why the word was read and preached at those their solemne fasts, that thereby the sinnes might be discovered and reformed: as God bids *Ieremie* to indite, and *Baruch* to write from his mouth, and to declare to the people their sinnes, with the plagues and judgements due unto them, that they might returne from their evill wayes, and so pacifie his wrath by crying unto him and reforming all the abominations. Thus we see this point also cleere. That the sinnes of a people, even of a few of them not punished, doe anger the Lord and provoke him against the whole Land, making the Land uncleane, neither can he be fully pacified any way, but by the punishing and taking away of those sinnes. Whereby it is most evident to the consciences of all men, what just cause the godly have to sigh and to tremble for all the abominations that are committed amongst them, and especially which being notoriously knowne doe still remaine unpunished.

The cause of the inquisition at fasts for horrible offences. 1 *Kings* 21.9, 10, 11.

One cause of reading and preaching the word at solemne fasts. *Nehem.*8.8. *Ierem.*36.2, 3.

Now to apply this unto our selves; And first for the generall humiliation of us all, afterward for the comfort of those few, that are such true mourners indeed.

Application.

First, this may strike the hearts of all sorts, who imagining that they are the servants of the Lord, yet hearing and seeing the fearefull apostasie, coldnesse and securitie of our age, even in many of the better sort; together with Atheisme, Popery, and all outragious and prophane licentiousnesse daily increasing in

For humiliation to the secure.

the rest, are yet never troubled therewith. And much more may it astonish all such, who are so farre off from the condition of these mourners, as that they can solace themselves as freely, when they heare of all excesse in iniquitie, and whatsoever can be devised by lewd men, to anger the Lord and to grieve his Spirit, as ever they were wont at other times. Most of all may it affright and awaken those, who use all devices to drive each thought of Gods anger or any judgement with every occasion of humiliation and mourning utterly out of their hearts.

But of all other is their estate most fearefull, who can make the beastly sinnes of others their chiefest sport. Oh you that are such, consider in your hearts! Is this the spirit of *Lot*, *Moses*, *Samuel*, *Ieremie*, *Ezra*, of these mourners here marked? Of our Saviour or *Paul*? Is this the Spirit of the Lord? How deceive you your soules in a vaine imagination? What will yee doe in the day of the Lords wrath, if he let it come upon us? as we justly deserve: Or what have yee done to turne it from us? Know, know for certaine, that this sinne of yours will one day undoubtedly bring you weeping enough; you cannot tell whether even in this life, as it did to them in the Captivitie; nay, even whether this same very day; when you shall doe nothing but weepe day and night in remembrance of this one sinne; that your hearts were so hard in the dayes of your prosperitie, that you could not mourne at all. Besides all the other miseries, that you are liable unto for all your sinnes, chiefely if God should give you up for them: when you shall be utterly destitute of comfort of the Lords mercy, protection and favour; untill you shall have soundly bewailed all this your senseless securitie.

Application for the comfort of the mourners.

But on the contrary; as this is given by the Lord for the comfort of all that mourne for the iniquities, because they are surely marked before the vengeance come, to be safe then: so it may serve for the sweet consolation and cheering up even of all those of every estate and degree, from the highest to the lowest, who finde their hearts thus affected in hearing of and beholding the abominations, committed daily to anger the Lord, howsoever it shall please him to visit us. Giue me leave therefore (if it were to digresse) a little, and to returne my speech to speake to your soules and consciences, for the confirming and strengthening

of

of all our hearts who are ſuch. The Lord here ſets before your faces the care which he hath for you. You are ſurely ſealed, whatſoever plagues he ſhall ſmite the earth withall; whether you be Rulers, from the greateſt to the meaneſt to begin with you. If your conſciences beare you witneſſe that your hearts are ſet to advance Gods true religion and all pietie, and by all holy means to ſuppreſſe iniquitie, and ſo to turne away the judgements threatned. And much more alſo if to this end, you ſtudie to procure what good you can, to the Church of Chriſt. If you mourne with *Ezra* for the grievous tranſgreſſions of the people, for defiling themſelves with the abominations of other Nations, and eſpecially with Poperie, Atheiſme and all irreligious licentiouſneſſe. Or if that your hearts doe melt with holy *Ioſiah*, for the former and preſent provocations, and to ſee how the word of the Lord is deſpiſed. If you vſe to lament and ſigh in beholding the intolerable frowardneſſe of men againſt the Lord, that they cannot be brought to ſubmit themſelves to his glorious Goſpell: and in obſerving ſuch a ſtrange turning back of many of our people in their hearts, as who will needs returne into *Egypt* and *Sodome* againe, and ſo ſtrive to provoke the Lord yet more thereby, and by all other their ſinnes. And if moreover in ſeeing that you cannot doe that good that you would in reforming the evils, you are not only daily humbled before the Lord upon your faces privately; but doe alſo ſhew your griefe openly in your places, as occaſion is offered, as this is an evident demonſtration of your unfained religion before the world, ſo it is a moſt ſtrong bulwarke to your owne ſoules againſt all feare of the miſeries that can any way come upon us.

Comfort to godly Rulers.

If as *Ezra*,

or *Ioſiah*.

Or ſecondly, If you be thoſe that ſucceed in the place of the Prophets, being ſet to watch over, and to warne the people committed to you, thereby to turne away the plagues, which are hying upon them, and doe finde in your ſelves the affections of *Ieremie* in heavineſſe and lamentation; when you ſee your paines to doe ſo little good, that your people generally grow rather worſe and worſe; that you labour in vaine, and ſpend your ſtrength in vaine, and for nothing, as *Eſay* complaineth; that although the bellowes be burnt, yet you melt but in vaine, the wickedneſſe is not taken away: ſo that you may ſeeme to have

Comfort to the Prophets that mourne.

Iſai. 49. 4.

have just cause to deeme them to be but reprobate silver, and such as the Lord hath weighed, as *Ieremie* bewaileth them in his time; this may comfort you, that you are of this number, that are marked. And if furthermore, for this cause, you finde your life to be a wearinesse, that with *Paul* you have a continuall sorrow in your hearts for your people, and that you could be content to endure any misery for them, to save them from the Lords wrath; this is a demonstration that the same spirit of *Paul* resteth upon you. And yet further also to comfort you; if you be such as are so farre off from serving the time, or flattering them to whom you are sent, in crying peace, peace, That you have set your selves in all faithfulnesse to discover their iniquities, and to crie out against all their sinnes, and that no feare can stop your mouth from doing your duties in your places; this testimony of your consciences shall be as a strong brazen wall unto you, whatsoever shall come to passe.

Ier. 6. 29.

Jer. 1. 8, 17.
Isai. 58. 1.
Ezech. 3. 17. & 33. 6, 7, 8.
Acts 20. 26, 27, 28.
Mica. 3. 8.
2 *Tim.* 1. 7.

Comfort to private Christians, sighing for the iniquitie.

And to speake generally; If you be private Christians, as *Lot* and these mourners here marked, and in stead of having a confederacie with the wicked in their evill wayes, you finde your selves vexed every day for the evils which you heare and see, it may minister unto you much assurance and heavenly consolation. And more specially if your hearts be troubled for these dreadfull sinnes: As first, for our monstrous unthankfulnesse for the Gospell, with all our blessings accompanying it, and for that wee are most of us so weary in living in obedience unto it: and so many on the other side, readie to live rather under that slaverie of Antichrist, or service of sinne and Satan. Or secondly, If you feele your soules continually grieved, in beholding, how many of us there are, which make a profession of the Gospell in word, yet deny utterly all power of it in our lives. And withall, how readie many amongst us, (who have heretofore made conscience of our wayes) are now to joyne hands and runne to all excesse, with the Atheist, and with everie prophane and filthy person. And if above all this, your hearts beare you witnesse, that you strive to keepe your selves unspotted in this last and sinfull generation, and neither by Schisme runne forth of the Church and communion of the Saints; so condemning the generation of his children on the

Psal. 73. 15.
Eccles. 10. 4.

one

one hand; nor leave your places and callings, ſo long as with a good conſcience you can enjoy them, to caſt your ſelves upon the rockes of innumerable evils: neither yet on the other hand, to decline to the coldnes, hypocriſie, and looſeneſſe of the time, this ſhall be your comfort perpetually. And yet to proceed a little further, If you thus ſtaying your ſelves from theſe extremes, doe uſe to ſpeake every one to his neighbour, as the godly did in *Malachies* dayes, to encourage one another to walke more heedfully and cheerefully in the wayes of the Lord, each in his ranke, and within the bounds of his calling; this ſhall be your witneſſe before the Lord. Or finally, If yet now, at leaſt at the view of our tranſgreſſions which follow, and the Lords threatnings againſt us, you can feele your hearts ſo affected, as thoſe mourners, and ſet to continue ſo to walke with your God; then this ſhall be unto you a gratious aſſurance, that you are indeed the Lords owne ſervants, as theſe mourners were. The ſame Spirit of the Lord reſteth upon you, you are ſurely ſealed therewith, and ſingled out for his Majeſtie. His care is as well for you, as ever it was for *Noah*, *Lot*, *Eliah*, or any of theſe mourners: for hee is ſtill the ſame to all who tread in their ſteps; his compaſſions faile not. This is written now to comfort you. Heaven and earth ſhall paſſe, but not one jot or tittle of his Word, untill every thing be accompliſhed. He may ſooner breake his covenant concerning the day and the night, than he can with you. The hilles may ſooner remove out of their places, than his mercie can from you. Let none of your hearts therefore faint, who have this witneſſe, that you endevour hereunto. But come whatſoever will, God will provide ſuch a deliverance for you, if he ſee it good. Or if hee ſend you into Captivitie, yet hee will there leade you, his Angels ſhall conduct you, his Spirit ſhall ſupport you, with joy unſpeakable, even in the midſt of all your trials, untill that your teſtimonie be fulfilled, your warfare accompliſhed, and the Crowne of glory ſet upon your heads; you are written upon the palmes of his hands, that you ſhall be ever in his ſight. And if he let you be taken away by death among the reſt; yet even death ſhall be unto you the greateſt advantage. It ſhall make an end of all your miſeries, that you ſhall not ſo much as ſee the evils to come. Then will the Lord turne all

Pſal.73.2,3.

Mal.3.16,17.

Iſa.54.10.

Iſai.49.15.

all your ſorrowes and feares into abundant joyes and ſecuritie, giving you the reward of all your labours, and whatſoever elſe you have hoped and longed after. Then ſhall you finde the fulneſſe of thoſe joyes, which never eye ſaw, nor ever eare heard, nor yet entred into mans heart to conſider of. And this ſhall you enjoy in his glorious preſence, with all his bleſſed Angels and Saints, with whom yee ſhall reigne for evermore.

1 *Cor.* 2. 9.

Application to all prophane contemners.

But as for all the reſt of wicked ſcoffers and prophane contemners of the Lord, and of all his mercifull fore-warnings, if he in his juſtice ſhould leave us up to ſuch a judgement, to be executed on us, through the helliſh devices of that bloudie Antichriſt, (whoſe rage and furie ſtill increaſeth, as our deliverances and proſperitie have done) then muſt you all know from him, be you Atheiſts, Papiſts, Belly-gods, Worldlings, that you muſt looke for your portion to be all alike; that ſhift or flie whither ſoever you will, yee ſhall never be able to flie from his vengeance. Though you could digge to hell, as the Prophet *Amos* ſpeaketh, yet his hand ſhould fetch you thence; and although you could climbe up to heaven, yet thence alſo hee would bring you downe: yea though you could hide your ſelves in the moſt ſecret caves among the rockes, yet even there ſhould his vengeance finde you out: and flying to the uttermoſt parts of the earth, hee will ſtill there command the ſword, the peſtilence and famine to purſue you, with terrour of heart, and trembling of conſcience, untill you be deſtroyed from the face of the earth. The Lord will ever ſet his face againſt you for evill and not for good; and this is that that you muſt certainly expect.

Amos 9. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Deut. 28.

Application to our pretended Catholikes.

And even for you likewiſe, that thinke you ſhall doe well enough, becauſe you have beene knowne to be ſo devoted to the Catholike Religion (as you terme it) and to ſuffer for it, doe not imagine your cauſe ſhall be any thing the better for this. If you beare falſe hearts to the Lords Anointed and to your native countrey; how can you looke that vengeance ſhall ſuffer you to live? Or can you perſwade your ſelves that a foraine enemie prevailing, (which evill the Lord ſtill deliver us from) ſhould ever truſt you, whom they found

ſo

ſo falſe to your Prince and countrey? Be it ſo, yet if you be knowne to be ſuch as have any wealth (if the Lord ſhould for all our provocations permit ſuch a day) as they have long looked for, have we not juſt cauſe to conceive, that Papiſt and Proteſtant ſhould be all alike? and that though all ſuch ſhould proclaime at each market croſſe, that they are Catholiques; yet that their goods would be the goods of Hugonotes, as it was at the French maſſacre in *Paris*? Would not then all ſuch be made Puritanes of the Parliament houſe? the deſperateſt ding-thrifts and ſharpeſt ſwords, ſlaſhing downe and carying all away? And although the Lord ſhall ſtill at the interceſſion of his moſt faithfull and deare ſervants, (as ſometimes of *Abraham*, *Moſes*, *Samuel*, and theſe mourners) preſerve us from the bloudy hands of our deadly and moſt cruell enemies, and from ever comming under the Babyloniſh yoake againe (which we ever begge and cry for) yet the eſtate of all you, that are the provokers of his Majeſtie and grievers of his people by your horrible ſinnes, ſhall be nothing the better. At death a heavier captivitie ſhall fall upon you when you ſhall be bound in everlaſting chains of darkneſſe, and reſerved unto the judgement of the great day, to be tormented for evermore. And thus if your ſleepy hearts come once to be throughly awaked, you ſhall be ſure to live in continuall expectation of vengeance, being chaſed of your owne wicked conſciences, as *Cain*, untill the Lords moſt juſt decree be accompliſhed upon you. Then you that could not once ſigh or cry to God at all, for the abominations and diſhonors done unto his Majeſtie, or in fearing his anger, but thought this fooliſhneſſe, ſhall have cauſe enough to call and cry continually, in feeling and fearing his moſt juſt and heavie indignation, with all his fierce plagues due unto you everlaſtingly. But of this we ſhall ſpeake yet more, when we come to the ſeverall miſeries, which they endured in the Captivitie.

The ſtate of all the wicked, though the Lord ſtill ſpare us at the prayers of his ſervants.

And thus much may ſerve for the eſtate both of the godly, mourning for all the abominations, and for the reſt. It may ſuffice likewiſe for another moſt juſt cauſe to drive us to watching and prayer with continuall mourning: ſeeing only the mourners are commanded to be marked, to be preſerved from the

the vengeance to come: and these are they principally that stay the judgement from rushing upon us; at least untill they be so marked and made safe.

Iob 22. the end.

But alas, have we not here a new cause to take up a dolefull complaint for the want hereof? Where are they who lament for the abominations, which we have received from all forreine Nations, and wherewith we have so polluted our profession, as after will appeare? Where are those whose hearts melt to thinke how the law of God is trodden under foot, and his judgements hastned daily by all our provocations? What is become of *Moses*, *Samuel*, *Ieremie*, *Paul*, and of that continuall heavinesse, which they were in, for the obstinacie of the people? Where are the two Prophets, prophesying after the manner of mourners, for the prevailing of that Antichrist, and the delusions of Gods people? That zeale of *Lot* for all our unlawfull deeds? Are we not come very generally to cry, *Peace, peace, and all is well*, desiring to be at ease, as they who trusted in the mountaine of Samaria? of whom *Amos* speaketh: and those who cried, *the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*? Are we not become (I meane exceeding many of us) as they who said, *The Lord will neither doe good nor evill*? Doe not our lives proclaime it? Or as those that spake against *Ieremie*, to lull themselves and all others still asleepe; saying, *We shall neither see sword nor famine*? In a word; Is it not with us for the most part, as with them that lived immediately before the floud, and before the overthrow of Sodome and Gomorrha? Doe we not eat and drinke, marie and give in mariage, as they; every man giving up himselfe to follow his owne way, and for his owne advantage; never regarding our *Noahs* building the Arke, and calling all to enter; nor our *Lots* mourning and crying to all, *Good brethren, deale not so wickedly*? Doe we not daily increase in our senselesnesse, and still more harden our selves against all warnings, signes, and tokens, untill the floud-gates of heaven be open, and the vengeance of God come powring downe? And to goe yet one step higher, and to adde this one demand more; Are not very many amongst us come to that height of impietie, to scorne and to abuse by all meanes, all those that mourne for the evils, and who will not run with us to

Amos 6.1.
Ierem. 7.4.

Ier. 5.12,13.

Iust cause of lamentation for the small number of true mourners.

Our generall securitie fearefull.

Scorning at all that mourne for the evils.

to all exceſſe of ungodlineſſe? And if any doe ever reprove ſuch, though in the griefe of their hearts, with the greateſt love and reverence, are they not readie to ſay, as thoſe unto *Lot*, Hence, who made thee a Ruler and a Iudge? ſo to thruſt them away with all diſgrace. Or, which is yet worſe, if worſe may be, Is not this too common in very many places, to uſe them as *Ieremie* was uſed, to load ſuch with all opprobrious ſlanders, as though they were the vileſt men, that could live upon the earth, and thoſe that ſeeke not the good of the Land, but the hurt; and as if indeed there were none to be hated but they, be they never ſo peaceable and obedient. And finally, are they not made ſuch in many places, as *Ieremie* ſaith of himſelfe, whom every bodie curſeth, though they have neither given nor taken upon uſury, but lived without offence or intermedling in the world? Nay, although they be ſuch perſons, whom all the world cannot touch; except for ſuch infirmities, as are incident to all the ſonnes of *Adam*; or the matters of their God, as *Daniel* was? Doe we not thus adde to the increaſe of their ſorrowes, to kindle more the Lords anger for the injuries done unto them, and by ſeeking to drive them out from amongſt us, or at leaſt to cauſe them to ceaſe crying to the Lord for us. Which unkindneſſe hee can no way endure; ſith theſe (I meane, who make conſcience of all his Commandements) are the deareſt unto him of all the people of the earth, and the only preſervers of the reſt, ſo long as they remaine amongſt us.

Concluſion.

And thus much ſhall ſerve for this in like manner, what cauſe we have to watch and pray, yea, to tremble and crie for the ſmall remainder of our mourners; and alſo to the end that wee our ſelves may be found to be of the number of them, ſo to helpe to appeaſe the wrath, or ſo to eſcape in the evill day.

CHAP.

Chap. IX.

The enemies by which the Lord threatneth or afflicteth his Church, are his ſouldiers; and what cauſe we have to give our ſelves to watching and prayer for the increaſe of them in number, pride and malice.

IT remaineth now that we ſhall come to ſhew the abominations for the which the godly ſo ſighed and cried, what and how great they were. But the handling thereof, may be more profitably reſerved unto the ſixt verſe, where the Holy Ghoſt ſets downe, how fierce his wrath was, and how grievous the plagues were, which the Lord threatneth to inflict upon them; that by the greatneſſe of the vengeance, we may better conſider the hainouſneſſe of the abominations.

Having therefore thus finiſhed this firſt Commiſſion, which was to the marking Angell, for the preſervation of all the godly: we will come to the ſecond commiſſion given to the deſtroying Angels, how they ſhould deale with all the reſt, contained in theſe words following.

VERSE 5. *And to the other he ſaid, in my hearing, Goe ye after him thorow the Citie and ſmite; Let not your eye ſpare, neither have pitie, ſlay utterly old and young, &c.*

The enemies by which God threatneth his Church, are his ſouldiers.

Here the Lord delivering this Commiſſion aloud, and bidding theſe deſtroying Angels to goe and ſmite, to ſpare none, will have us all to conſider this well: That the enemies by which his Church is afflicted, as the Babylonian here meant, (to whom he ſaid, *Goe ye after him thorow the Citie and ſmite*) are the Lords ſouldiers. They come not, nor fight of themſelves alone, but at his command: they fight alſo his battels, though they know not ſo much, nor purpoſe any ſuch matter, but doe it in the pride and malice of their hearts.

No

No point is more neceſſarie for us to know ; becauſe in the plots and conſpiracies of wicked enemies, and in all the rage againſt the Church of God, it is ſo rare a thing for any man to looke at the Lord, and how he ſends and orders all ; but every man almoſt uſeth ſtill to looke only at the hand of the enemie. Neither is any truth more cleerely ſet forth in the Booke of God. We will content our ſelves with two or three places, which are paſt all exception, in which he hath of purpoſe taught this point moſt fully.

The knowledg of this point moſt neceſſary, and moſt plainly ſet downe in the Scriptures.

1.

In the captivitie of Iſrael, the Lord ſent on them the King of Aſſhur.

Iſay 10.5,6.

The Aſſyrian, the rod of the Lords wrath.

First, we may begin with the former great Captivitie of Iſrael, of the Ten Tribes caried captive into Aſſyria by *Salmanazar* ; which was a good ſpace before this captivitie of Iudah. The Holy Ghoſt ſaith, that the Lord in his wrath ſent upon them the King of Aſſhur to deſtroy them. Whom the Prophet *Eſay* (in ſpeaking of both the Captivities joyntly, and the like inſtruments and reaſons of both) calleth the rod of Gods wrath; becauſe he had in his wrath prepared the Aſſyrian as his rod, to whip both Iſrael and Iudah for their rebellion. He termes alſo their ſtaffe, meaning the weapons in their hands, his indignation : becauſe all their weapons were chiefly prepared to execute his moſt fierce indignation. He cals them moreover the Lords axe, whereby he cut downe the Nations. All were the Lords inſtruments : He ſent theſe Aſſyrians, and gave them the charge to ſpoile and trample under foot the rebellious Iſraelites, as the mire in the ſtreets. But did the proud Aſſyrian know thus much, how God uſed him as his ſouldier ? or did he purpoſe in it to execute Gods wrath, and his terrible judgement ? No, ſaith the Lord, he thinketh not ſo, neither doth his heart eſteeme it ſo, as to avenge my quarrell, but he imagineth to deſtroy not a few nations : that is, All that he doth, he doth in pride and malice of his owne wicked heart ; and by his owne ſtrength, as he fooliſhly thinketh. Therefore the Lord ſaith plainly, That when he had uſed him, as his rod to correct his people, firſt Samaria, and then Ieruſalem, firſt Iſrael and after Iudah, that he would ſurely burne the rod in the fire : He would viſit the proud heart of the King of Aſſhur, and bring downe his proud lookes, and as a fire in his vengeance conſume him utterly.

The Lord gave them ŷ charge, though the enemie thought not ſo.

After God hath corrected his Church, he wil burne his rods in the fire.

Eſay 12.17,14.

And

2
In carrying *Manaſſes* into Captivitie.
2 *Chr.* 33. 1,2,3.
*verſ.*9.
10.
17.
The Lord brought on him the Aſſyrian.

And ſecondly for *Manaſſeh* the ſonne of that worthy *Hezechiah*, when he went backe from the good wayes of his father, and ſet up againe all the abominations that his father had taken away, and had alſo deſtroyed that pietie and religion, which his good father had ſo laboured to build up: and finally, when he cauſed his people to doe worſe than the Heathen, whom the Lord had plagued, the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *That firſt the Lord ſpake unto him, and to his people, but they would not regard.* And when that would not ſerve, he ſaith expreſly, *That the Lord brought upon them the Captaines of the hoaſt of the King of Aſſhur, who tooke Manaſſeh, and put him in fetters, and bound him in chaines, and carried him to Babel.* And *that then when he was in tribulation, he praied to the Lord his God, and humbled himſelfe greatly before the God of his fathers; and God was intreated of him, and heard his praier, and brought him againe into his kingdome in Ieruſalem: then Manaſſeh knew that the Lord was God.* So that it was God eſpecially that brought the Aſſyrian upon *Manaſſeh*, and fettred him, and carried him into Babylon, and there heard his praier, and brought him backe, and ſet him againe in his kingdome: it was God that did it.

God did all in it.

3
So in this Captivitie the Lord likewiſe did all.
2 *Chron.* 36.17.

Thirdly, for this Captivitie, as the Prophet here foreſaw it, and the Lord ſaid, he would doe it; and like as he bids the enemies, which are repreſented by theſe Angels, to *goe and ſmite*; ſo the Holy Ghoſt ſaith plainly, (uſing the very ſame phraſe of ſpeech, that is uſed concerning *Manaſſeh*) *That God brought upon them the King of the Caldeans, who ſlew their young men with the ſword, and ſpared neither young nor old, but made this havocke of them all.* They came not meerely of themſelves, but God ſent them as his executioners. This *Ieremie* confeſſeth in his Lamentations, *That the Lord did it*; acknowledging thus in the perſon of all Iudah and Ieruſalem, *Thou haſt called as in a ſolemne day, my terrours round about*: meaning, that the Lord had called their terrible enemies on every ſide to compaſſe them in, that none might eſcape his wrath: wherein he ſhewes, how the Lord muſtered the enemies to revenge theſe abhominations. And thus hath it ever beene, when enemies have come againſt the Church, (as we may ſee cleane thorow the booke of God, and eſpecially in the booke of the Iudges) it

*Lament.*2.22.

was

was principally, becauſe the Lord had ſtirred them up, he had muſtered and brought them. For if he but lift up his enſigne, or but hiſſe, or whiſtle for them, as the Prophet ſpeaketh, they come amaine from all the ends of the earth. They ſleepe not, nor faint, unleſſe the Lord himſelfe ſtay them or plucke them backe; putting his hooke into their noſtrils, and his bit into their jawes, as he did to that proud *Senecharib*, when he came ſo fiercely againſt Ieruſalem. Although (as we heard) the enemies themſelves doe not know ſo much. And when is it that the Lord brings them? Even then when his people, whom he hath put in truſt with his moſt holy religion, through long peace, eaſe, and proſperitie, become utterly unthankfull, and grow to loath the heavenly Manna; when once they begin to be haughtie againſt the Lord, and rebellious againſt his word and meſſengers ſent unto them, and they will obey it no further than it doth like themſelves; when they doe wax ſo ſenſeleſſe and indurate, as all his fatherly rods of ſcarcitie, famine, peſtilence, and other ſickneſſes, ſignes and tokens from heaven and earth, no, nor the continuall warnings of his ſervants, can doe them any more good to move them any longer. And finally, when in ſtead of repenting and meeting him with intreatie of peace, they proceed to mocke his ſervants, to miſuſe his meſſengers, deſpiſing his word ſent in mercy to warne them; for then he can beare no longer, but ſets up his enſignes and cals for the ſword of the enemie to avenge his quarrell, thereby to take away religion and all the comforts of this life in one day, for that their intolerable contempt of all his bountie, long ſuffering, and compaſſion. This is that which he hath threatned in his law; That he will puniſh ſuch a people yet ſeven times more: the ſword and captivitie being the laſt and heavieſt outward plague, and oft accompanied with all the reſt, chiefly with famine, and moſt cruell and ſavage beaſts to devoure the rebellious people. This he did fearfully verifie in the enſamples mentioned both in the captivitie of Iſrael and Iudah, chiefly in this latter, as the Holy Ghoſt plainly ſheweth, declaring the cauſes of it. How, when after their former leſſe captivities and ſundry plagues begun, they in generall ſtill increaſed their treſpaſſes wonderfully, according to all the abominations of the heathen, and

Iſa. 5. 26, 27.

Iſa. 37. 29.

Levit. 26. 3, 14, *to* 26.

Deut. 28. 15. *to* 50.

2 *King.* 17. 13, 14, 15, 16.

2 *Chron.* 33. 10.

2 *Chron.* 36. 14, 15, 16, 17.

This threatned in the Law.
Dan. 9. 4, 5, 6.
Levit. 26. 24.
Deut. 28. 25. *to* 48.
Ezech. 5. 17.
Ezech. 14.
2 *Chr.* 36. 13, 14.

and withall mocked and misused his messengers, which he had sent unto them in compassion to call them to repentance, then there was no remedie. But he brought upon them the King of the Caldeans, to execute all his fierce wrath and vengeance upon them all. God gave all into his hands. And this, as he saith, was *to fulfill the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Ieremie, untill the Land had her fill of Sabaoths. So all the daies that shee lay desolate, shee kept Sabaoth, to fulfill seventie yeeres.* In which words, it is most evident that the whole Captivitie, both for the manner and continuance, was altogether appointed and directed by the Lord. Whence we may most plainly conclude, with that of the Prophet *Esay*, where he brings in the Lord thus speaking of himselfe: *Behold, I have created the Smith that bloweth the coales in the fire, and him that bringeth forth an instrument for his worke; I have created the destroyer to destroy.* If any man shall yet doubt of any part hereof, let him reade with reverence the 26. Chapter of Leviticus, and there he shall see all this set downe in order, especially from the 14. verse to the end.

verſ. 17. to the end of 21.

Isay 54.16.

Application to our selves, to behold the Lords Armies.

To apply this now to our times, and to our selves; it being now our lesson to awaken us, and to make us to looke at the Lord, levying his Armies against us, if any thing can stirre us.

1. Popish Buls sent to move our people to rebellion.

Did that proud Nebuchadnezzar of Rome send out his bellowing Buls, to move all the Lords people to rebell against his Anointed? Or hath he so often practised our destruction both openly and secretly altogether without the Lord? Or did any of that bloudie League, being Antichrists sworne servants, so band themselves as of themselves, without the Lords command, to threaten so farre forth the ruinating of Christs kingdome, and the rooting out of his Gospell? Or those that came against us in the yeare eightie eight, in their mightie Armada, which the enemie, in the pride of his heart, had named, The Navie invincible, purposing nothing else, but the utter desolation both of this Church and Kingdome, and to massacre the mother with the children, to satiate themselves with the bloud of every one of us, as their butcherly instruments of cruelties did proclaime to all the world. Did these (I say) come only of themselves, in the malice and hautinesse of their hearts,

2. The bloudie league.

3. The huge Armada, viz. Navie invincible.

and

and without the Lord so disposing and threatning us by them? Could they or durst they ever have attempted those things of themselves alone? No, no, The Lord will have us all to know hereby, that these were his owne souldiers; it was hee that mustered them; hee lift up his ensigne unto them; he bade them so to threaten us, to goe and smite: Hee only brought the insolent Babylonian towards our Ierusalem, he shewed us the edge of his axe, he shaked the sword at us, to cause us to seeke him. And so at our humiliation and prayers, which we then powred out so vehemently, with fasting, mourning, and confession of our sinnes, thorow the whole Land, his owne holy hand plucked them backe againe. He armed both windes and waters to take vengeance of that most insolent and cruell attempt, whereof so many records shall beare witnesse to the end of the world. And although the Lord wrought this our deliverance with their overthrow, so wonderfully by his owne mightie arme, and so evidently with his owne right hand, that we might justly have hoped, that they durst never have once so much as thought of attempting to rise up against us after; yet doe wee not see, how they have since exceeded the insolencie of all former ages? How they have not only contrived and practised sundrie most bloudie treasons since against the Lords Anointed, thereby to make way for the butchering of us all; but even so lately devised so new, so strange, and so desperate a stratagem against our dread Soveraigne, with our noble Queen, our gratious young Prince, and all that Royall progenie; yea, with the Right Honorable Councell and Nobilitie, the whole state and bodie of our Nation, to consume all at once, by that most hideous and infernall furnace? For what could they intend, but to have made us all as flesh for the cauldron, and that very day to have beene the dismall day, both of our flourishing Realmes, and also of the Church and Gospell of Christ, so farre as they were able? Of which most execrable fact, never shall future age keepe silence, to the branding of that bloudie Religion, with the perpetuall infamie of lying and murther, the two principall workes of the Devill, and brands of his servants, as our Saviour directly witnesseth; so as none can pretend ignorance thereof, except they will wilfully blinde their owne eyes.

Levit.26.
Hosea 5.15.
Yet turned back and overthrowne at our prayers: when windes and waters were armed against them to take vengeance for us.

4
Many treasons since.

5
Chiefly the infernall furnace.

Branding that Religion for ever.
Iohn 8. 44.

6

Increaſe of the outrage for Popery and all prophaneneſſe. Their deadly malice increaſed, declared in all devices to divide and diſgrace us. After ſo many convictions.

And to draw towards the concluſion of this point; what meanes that increaſe of outrage for Popery and all prophaneneſſe? what is that ſo deadly malice in all thoſe who are ſo bent to that Romiſh Idolatrie and impietie; I meane their hatred againſt both the Goſpell and all the true profeſſors of it? How is it that they are not afraid to ſhew this openly, by all devices which they can invent to diſgrace the Religion of the Lord, and to divide us utterly amongſt our ſelves, to fall by one another; and that after ſo many and ſo late and ſtrange diſcoveries of their barbarous cruelties and Machivillian plots above all, of all other religions, that the world hath heard of; with ſuch notable teſtimony given from heaven of Gods wonderfull protection in all the admirable deliverances of the profeſſors thereof among us.

Theſe fearefull denunciations of vengeance.

And dangerous prognoſtications of a moſt heavie ſcourge from Babylon.

What are all theſe with our ungratefull abuſing of them by our impenitencie, I beſeech you (and herein I appeale to the conſciences of all men) what are they, but infallible denunciations of the haſting of the Lords moſt terrible vengeance, unleſſe we repent ſpeedily? Or what can they, with all the former prognoſticate (if wee may make a particular conſtruction of them) but threatnings of the bringing in indeed of that dreadfull ſcourge, (which he in mercy ſtill keepe from us) which formerly he hath but ſhaken towards us, and frighted us withall. To give us either wholly into the hand of that bloudy whore of Babylon, and ſo to bring our neckes againe under that cruell yoake (the common vexation of all the people of the Lord) or at leaſt that they ſhould come to dominier and tyrannize among us, and ſetting up their curſed Idolatrie againe, to pollute the Lords holy Religion; and in the end to thruſt forth his ſacred truth, and our ſelves to live ever in horror and ſhame, having alwayes the ſword at our throats, as in France and other countries, where they have ſo prevailed, they have had too fearefull experience. Were not this moſt righteous for our abuſing that his heavenly Treaſure, committed to us, beſide all other our ſinnes, which yet I inſtantly pray day and night, that he may prevent, by our moſt ſpeedie, and unfained repentance. And may not this be a juſt cauſe, why he hath ſuffered theſe ſo to increaſe, becauſe howſoever we can be content with an outward forme and name of his holy Religion, which by the good Lawes of our Land, wee doe

For abuſing his Religion.

Not enduring the power of it, but ſeeking to deſtroy it.

doe truly profeſſe; yet few of us can endure the power and practiſe of it in our ſelves, or others? We cannot deny, but that the true practiſe of Religion, is the very life and ſoule of all Religion, and yet how many doe ſeeke to deſtroy it, in whomſoever it appeares, if all ſcornes and contempt of it can poſſibly doe it? for is it not an uſuall thing with many in moſt places, to like much better of the prophane man, that hath caſt all Religion and conſcience behind his backe, than of thoſe in whom the ſeeds or the leaſt beginning of grace doth appeare? Or which is yet worſe, are not many of us in too many places growne to this, to like much better of the Papiſt and ungodly, preferring them to be our companions, and accounting them farre honeſter men, than ſuch as unfainedly feare the Lord, making conſcience to walke before him, in that good way wherein wee all (except the Popiſh ſort) agree in word and generall profeſſion? Let common experience teſtifie, how few they are who can brook that man who is a diligent frequenter of the word of the Lord, a ſtrict obſerver of the Sabbath; carefull to teach and inſtruct his family, that cannot like of oathes and blaſphemies, filthie ſpeeches and exceſſe of drinking or other vanities. And what may this ſeeme to be, but to joyne hands with the enemies of God, and by theſe and the like to proclaime a kinde of defiance againſt him, that ſuch will not have him to rule over them? yea, even to challenge him, or at leaſt to provoke him, to bring in the enemies to avenge his quarrell. If therefore the Lord of Hoaſts doe call for them, to riſe up againſt us in new conſpiracies or open violence, and with them all the crew of wicked and ungodly men, in whom we have ſo delighted, to take part with thoſe to our deſtruction (as they, it is to be feared, will be as outragious as the other, againſt all ſoundly fearing God) is it not juſt? Yea, if he ſhould let them to make it *Bellum prodigorum*, the day of all the ſpend-thrifts, and of all the vile perſons of the Land, to have their fingers in every mans coffers, and their hands waſhen in the bloud of them, whom they have hated, ſo ſoone as ever any of the Babyloniſh deſignes ſhall take their effect, could we wonder at it? May wee not much rather wonder at and admire his former long ſufferings, that hee hath only hitherto raiſed them up againſt us, as to drive us to turne unto him,

Liking better of the prophane man, or of the Papiſt, than the moſt religious.

Experience of the diſlike of all true lovers of Religion.

A manifeſt joyning hands and calling for the enemie.

How righteous with God to bring in the day of the ſpend-thriſts.

him, but ſuffered them not to prevaile, no, not ſo much as againſt any one of us. That though we have beene after a ſort in the midſt of the hot fiery furnace; yet not ſo much as the ſmell of the fire hath beene felt upon us, when as notwithſtanding we are ſo many of us ſo readie by our countenancing them and joyning with them in their wickedneſſe, to blow this fire of his vengeance; to cauſe it ſo farre as in them lieth, to conſume us utterly in one day. Can we ever looke to be freed from the danger, untill we more generally abhorre their wayes? Or can wee otherwiſe imagine, but that our deſperate perils muſt needs increaſe daily by them, ſo long as we are ſtill ſo much delighted in them, and caſt off the Lord?

To admire Gods mercy in ſaving us in the midſt of the fire.

We cannot be aſſured to be delivered from them till we abhorre their wayes.

Oh if we had generally ſo received him, as our Lord and Maſter, as we have entred into a ſolemne covenant with him at our Baptiſme, and as in words we make profeſſion; then had he undoubtedly long agoe caſt ſuch a feare upon them, as they durſt never have plotted any more againſt his Anointed or againſt his Sanctuary. Oh if we could yet but thinke of the good motions and purpoſes which wee have had in the midſt of our dangers, and our greateſt deliverances. That for thoſe preſervations and the redeeming of our lives, we would begin to leade new lives, and become new men! Oh, I ſay, That we would at length ſet our hearts faithfully to performe thoſe our Vowes ſo oft renewed with our God, and ſubmit our ſelves cheerefully to obey the heavenly Goſpell of his Sonne, becomming zealous in the profeſſion thereof! Then would the Lord ſoone humble our enemies; He would either cauſe their rage to ceaſe utterly from us, as he did ſundrie times in *Iudah*, when the people ſo ſought his face, or if they would ſtill purſue us, as the *Egyptians* did *Iſrael* into the heart of the ſea, we ſhould not need to feare, but even ſtand ſtill, and ſee what he would doe for us, yet once againe in our finall delivery from them, and in their perpetuall confuſion. But ſith we are daily further off from this unfained obedience to the Goſpell, and grow more rebellious; certainly wee can never truly expect, that theſe enemies (which are his ſword drawne againſt us) ſhall be turned backe; much leſſe can wee ſecure our ſelves from them, untill wee begin to meet him with a more generall ſubmiſſion and intreatie of peace. That is, untill

And renew our vowes, beginning to performe them.

Ezech. 16.4.6.
Eccles. 5.3,4,5.

Our enemies humbled by our turning to the Lord.
Pſal. 81.11,12, 13,14,15.

Never till then

untill that wee doe begin to give a more thankfull and welcome entertainment to his holy worship and religion, and bring forth better fruits of our profession, bearing more true affection to his servants, and giving lesse countenance unto his enemies, we are never to looke for any peace, untill his quarrell be avenged. He will be knowne to be the same mightie God that ever hee was, to hate sinne as much as ever he did, to be as true in his threatnings as ever in former age, and as zealous for his owne glory. And this especially must wee assure our selves of, if the like abominations be found among us, as those which brought these cruell enemies upon the people of *Iudah*, even as he threatned them in all the dayes of *Iosiah*; and if hee hitherto have used all other his rods in vaine amongst us; and namely, these three of all other, to wit, the sword of the destroying Angell, shaking and smiting in most parts of our Land, for so many yeeres together; The sword of the bloudie enemie devouring about us; The same so oft and so long shaken at us, and at length so neere to have beene sheathed in the bowels of every one of us that professe his name.

What wee should doe seeing the Lords Armies approaching. 1 *Chron.* 20. 16.

Now then these things being so, It concerneth so many of us, as whose eyes the Lord hath opened, to see the mustering of his armies, and who it is, that bids them goe against us and smite; to doe as *David* and the Elders of Israel did, when the Angell of the Lord having his sword drawne, stretched out his hand against Ierusalem. It is full time that each of us who are the Lords remembrancers, humble our selves in secret, falling upon our faces, crying unto our God, and never give him any rest, untill he be appeased. Yea that all of us, who are the Lords watch-men, doe get upon our walles and watch-towers, and still as the enemie approacheth neerer, crie lowder to awaken us out of our dead sleepe, and to warne all. That those in authoritie may more zealously command, all inferiours more cheerefully obey, to the more joyfull receiving and professing the Lords most glorious Religion, that so his anger being asswaged, hee may cease from sending any more the destroyers against us, lest otherwise in the end, our Religion, peace, prosperitie, lives and all doe pay for it, and be utterly taken away by them together. And let us all humbly againe confesse with the Prophet *Amos*;

Our ſo many confeſſions by authoritie, are ſo many principall witneſſes of his threatnings by them.

The Lion hath roared upon us, all ſorts have heard him (as wee have ſo oft, and ſo publikely confeſſed) *who ſhall not then tremble?* The Lord God hath by his threatnings many a time ſpoken to us, and ſtill ſpeakes every day more and more, making us each houre to hearken for ſome new treacherie from Rome, and to wonder that we heare of none of ſo long: and likewiſe cauſing all of us to admire the riches of his goodneſſe, in that hee hath ſo miraculouſly preſerved us all from them unto this very day: who then among us can but give ſignification hereof? Is it not therefore full time to doe what we can, every one with the Lord by inſtant prayer, and each with men alſo, ſtirring up one another to turne and crie unto the Lord, that hee doe not indeed bring the enemie upon us, and give us into their hands without any pitie, as hee did this people, and as hee hath ſo oft and ſo neerely accompliſhed the like wrath upon us? But this may ſuffice for this cauſe, which the Lord gives us all hereby to watch and pray day and night, if wee would have him to ſtay, or to turne from us the ſword of the Babylonian, and every other enemie and terrible plague: or at leaſt, if wee would finde him a hiding place in the day of his vengeance.

Hitherto of the firſt part of the Commiſſion to the deſtroying Angels, to goe and ſmite.

Chap. X.

The mourners being once marked and made ſure, then comes the vengeance; for the deſtroyers follow at the heeles of the marking Angell: And what need we have therefore to watch and pray, becauſe wee know not whether this be not alreadie accompliſhed, or how neere it is.

Verse 5. *And to the other he ſaid in my hearing; Goe yee after him thorow the Citie, and ſmite, let your eye ſpare none, &c.*

IN this next place we are to obſerve, how the Lord bids the deſtroyers to goe after the marking Angell, following him, as it were, hard at the heeles, that ſo ſoone as ever the ſervants

of

of God are marked and safe, they should stay no longer; but presently execute their charge, which was, Kill, kill, and spare none: for so the words doe plainly import.

Herein the Lord would have us all to know yet further, that so soone as ever hee hath gathered forth those, that bewaile the sinnes of the times, that is, his faithfull ones, from among the rest, or made sure provision for them, then hee will stay no longer, but presently begin the execution of his vengeance on the rest which remaine.

The mourners marked, then comes the vengeance.

This truth the Lord hath left unto us as cleare as any of the former; that when we see him taking the godly away, all may learne to prepare for themselves to escape, or else be left more without excuse. To shew this in order out of the former destructions; as being in my understanding most fit, as so set downe, to this purpose; and also most plainly for the simplest to conceive of.

This set downe clearely, and why.

1. *Noah* is no sooner in the Arke, fast lockt in by the Lord himselfe, and so out of the danger, but presently the floud-gates of heaven are set open, the fountains of the great depths broken up, destruction rusheth upon them: that flie they, or climbe they whithersoever they will, the vengeance of God still followeth them at the heeles, until they be utterly swept away from the face of the earth, without any more pitie and compassion.

1
In the old world.
Gen. 7. 11, 13, 16, 17.
Noah.

2. *Lot* is no sooner out of Sodom, and gotten safe into Zoar, past all the danger, but (though it was a goodly morning to see to, the Sunne rising gloriously upon the earth, as it was wont, yet) the fire and brimstone came powring downe, The Holy Ghost saith, that *The Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven, and overthrew all.* He turned all those filthie Cities into ashes, making them most loathsome pits, and a terrible monument of his most severe vengeance to all such beastly livers, to the end of the world. All perish together in an instant, as they were partakers together in the same filthie sinnes. Howling and crying then will doe no more good: no place is now left to repentance, nor to mercy any longer.

2
Lot.
Gen. 19. 22, 23, 24, 25.
2 *Pet.* 2. 6.

3. The Christians are no sooner gotten out of Ierusalem to Pella, according to the warning, but presently Ierusalem is taken,

3
The last overthrow of Ierusalem.

taken, (as *Iosephus* reports) and then as great cruelties are exercised, as ever upon any Citie or people before, and as great miseries followed them, according as our Saviour had foretold.

Matth.24.

4. This captivitie beginning upon the death of *Iosiah.*

And lastly, that same holy *Iosiah* hath his eyes no sooner closed, that he might not see the vengeance, and himselfe taken to his rest, as the Lord had promised him; because his heart so melted, at the hearing of the abominations, and the judgements denounced for them, but straight-way, even within three moneths beginnes this wofull tragedie of Iudah and Ierusalem. As the flying away of the Swallow is a signe of Winter at hand; so the departing and taking away of these mourners forth of any Church, must needs be a fearefull threatning of some terrible Winter, if not a desolation, to come upon that people; especially, when we consider, what such are for the preservation of the place where they are. And so much first for the evidence of this truth.

2 Chron. 34. 27, 28.

Jerem. 8. 7.

Gen 17. 10, 11. & 19. 22.

2 Chron. 34. 27, 28.

Application to our selves.

Now that we may againe returne home unto our selves; Let us see whether hereby wee have not just cause to be awakened, and each to betake our selves to watching and prayer, to stay the vengeance of God, before it be come upon us, and it be too late. Have not many of our *Noahs*, I meane, many of Gods faithfull servants, most famous both in Church and Common-wealth, for helping to build and prepare the Arke, beene taken away from us, not many yeeres agoe, long before their time? And amongst others; Did not the Lord specially plucke unto himselfe, in a short space, together, sundrie of our most worthily renowmed and victorious champions, so approved against that proud *Goliah* of Rome? Hath he not thus carried up these, into the Arke, not made with hands, as accounting us thereby unworthy that they should remaine any longer amongst us upon the earth, to helpe to stand betweene the Lords wrath and us? What heart was so flintie, which dissolved not into teares for sundrie of them? Or which was not astonished at the apprehension of his manifest displeasure therein, and in a fearefull consideration of that which he saith, *That the righteous are taken away from the evils to come.*

Many of our *Noahs* pluckt into the Arke.

Isai. 57. 1. Our comfort in the remnant of the mourners still among us.

This yet is some comfort; That wee have still some *Noahs* carefully preparing and finishing the Arke, and warning the

secure

ſecure and unthankfull world. All our *Lots* are not yet pluckt from amongſt us. The Lord of hoaſts hath as yet in mercy reſerved us a remnant, who unfainedly feare the tokens of his wrath. He hath ſome that ſtill lift up their voices like trumpets, to tell his people of their ſinnes. Some that lift up their hearts with their hands, with *Moſes* againſt *Amaleck*. Some that make continuall interceſſion with faithfull *Abraham*. Some that mourne in ſecret, who wraſtle and weepe with *Iacob*, and who will not let the Lord goe, untill he ſhew us mercy and ſave us from the ſcourge, which we have juſtly deſerved. Some, I ſay, (for what are they compared with the reſt, or in regard of our time and meanes, or that they have beene in ſundry parts of the Land) otherwiſe we had beene made long agoe as *Sodome* and like unto *Gomorrha*. And we may further ſay by the infinite mercy of God; That the Lords Anointed is ſtill preſerved, for our ſhelter and the breath of our noſtrils, by whom alone under the higheſt, we hitherto enjoy our ſafetie, in the midſt of the greateſt furies of our implacable and bloud-thirſty enemies. If the Lord had ever, or yet ſhould never ſo little take away his hand for all our provocations, (which evill of all other, he ever turne from us, like as hitherto he hath done) ſith the enemies hunt after his life and the lives of us all continually, and our ſinnes doe cry for it, what then could we looke for? Or if he ſhould any way ſuffer the mouthes of all his faithfull meſſengers to be ſhut that there might be none to reprove, and much more if he once take from amongſt us thoſe that ſigh and cry out for all the abominations, and reſtraine utterly that ſpirit of mourning and prayer, what may we expect then? And is not this the thing which the Atheiſt and belly-god, with all the company of the wicked and ungodly doe deſire ſo much, and which the Idolatrous murthering enemies doe conſpire continually? And why? Becauſe theſe are they that chiefly trouble all the wicked: theſe will not ſuffer them to lye wallowing in their ſinne; but ſeeke to pull ſome of them with violence out of the fire, others to ſave with feare as *Iude* ſpeaketh. Theſe are continually watching upon their wals, crying out of iniquitie with *Ieremie*, and threatning the judgements of God approaching for all the crying ſinnes, ſo to turne away the plagues

Iſai. 58. 1.

Iſai 1. 9. And the preſervation of the Lords Anointed.

Lament. 4. 20. What could we looke for, theſe being taken away.

Though the ungodly long for it, and why.

Iude 23.

plagues from us by turning us to the Lord. Theſe are ſtill in Chriſts place calling Gods people out of Babylon ; diſcovering the filthineſſe of the whore, and warning all to get farre off from her for feare of her burning, to beware of being partakers with her in her ſinne, leſt they be partakers with her in her torment.

*Apoc.*18.4.

And to be briefe, for that theſe are they, who have ſtood principally in the way of the bloudie enemie, that they could neither bewitch nor invade the Church and Sanctuarie of the Lord, as otherwiſe they would have done. Well, all of us ſhould yet conſider in time, that if theſe ſhall be once pluckt away from us, (as being unworthy of them) and the Swallow having taken her flight (howſoever ſome may conceit, that then it would be well with us, and we ſhould have merry times, yet) then undoubtedly we may juſtly looke for the coldeſt and wofulleſt winter, that ever the Church amongſt us endured or felt : for after that theſe are once marked and made ſure, what can be expected, but the deſtroyers to follow after their heeles ? what, but this terrible charge, *Smite, ſpare none.* Then ſhall belly-god and worldling, Papiſt and Atheiſt, be all alike ; becauſe they have joyned alike in angring the Lord, and grieving his ſervants, to make them thus to ſigh and cry unto him. And thus had it beene with them long ere this day, if ever forraine enemie had prevailed, or any of their treaſonable practiſes ; and much more if that late infernall device had taken effect : yea, if the Lord of hoaſts had not in mercy, at the cries of theſe mourners, ſaved us even miraculouſly from that evill day. This may teach us therefore to cry day and night, that our ſhelter may never be taken away from us ; but that it may ſpread it ſelfe more largely, and that the candle of Iſrael may never be put out, but ſhine ſtill more bright, untill his glorious appearing. This may alſo warne all of us, who beleeve the word of the Lord, to make more account of every *Noah*, which is yet admoniſhing and finiſhing the Arke : and of poore *Lot*, whoſe righteous ſoule is vexed for the abounding of the iniquities : of faithfull *Ieremie*, who continueth to bewaile our eſtate, and of all our mourners crying out for all our abominations. And finally, it may inforce us at the length to make more reckoning

Theſe once taken away, to looke for the judgement.

When all ſhall be alike.

Thus had it beene, if God had not prevented.

To cry for the preſervation of our ſhelter, and all theſe.

To make more account of *Noah* and our mourners.

ning of all thoſe, who ſtand up with *Moſes* in the breach to ſtay the Lords anger, and of ſuch as ceaſe not with *Samuel*, to cry unto him for us, to ſave us from the Philiſtims.

Seeing that theſe are unto us our *Eliahs*, the very chariots and horſemen of our land; Theſe as holy *Moſes*, hold the Lords hands, and are as faithfull *Abraham* the vaile of our eies and our protection from all our enemies round about us: To draw towards the ſhutting up of this point alſo; This may cauſe us all to conſider with our ſelves, how unwiſe we have been and are too generally in this behalfe, for that we have been and are our owne enemies, even to the working of our certaine perdition long before this, if the Lord had not beene exceedingly mercifull unto us; Firſt, in provoking his divine Majeſtie to the uttermoſt, to have deprived us of our ſhelter and to put out our light utterly. And withall in making ſo baſe account of thoſe, who are unto us as *Noah*, in vexing the ſoule of righteous *Lot*, by our ſeeking to drive him out, for his brotherly admoniſhing us. It may make us to lay to heart, how we have wrought againſt our ſelves, in ſcorning and uſing all indignities towards all thoſe, whom the Lord hath vouchſafed to be unto us ſuch a meanes of our preſervation; that ſo long as they are amongſt us, the vengeance of God cannot ſo heavily come upon us. Who have beene for us as *Paul* was for all in the ſhip with him, the ſaving of our ſelves, our houſes and goods, our lives and our liberties. Is it not for the godly principally, that he continueth his Goſpell, our gracious Prince, peace and proſperitie, with all other our bleſſings? which without them we might looke to have taken away from us, and the full viols of his wrath poured downe upon us, as in the Powder-treaſon and many others, we had otherwiſe felt it long agoe. Oh, let us then beſeech him againe and againe (even all of us that have any ſenſe hereof) that it would pleaſe him to open our blinde eies, which ſeeing theſe things ſee them not, and having heard them ſo long from heaven, from the Lords owne mouth, have yet regarded them ſo little. And let us intreat him, that he would take from us at length our hard and ſtony hearts, which have beene ſo oft ſtricken upon heretofore, yet have not felt. That he would now give us ſuch tender and relenting conſciences,

These our chariots & horſemen.

Our hurt in grieving theſe.

Acts 27.24.

It is for the godly that God continues his Goſpell, with the bleſſings accompanying it.

sciences, that every one of us may duly consider the abominations and tokens of his anger among us, and that we may all with that holy *Iosiah*, have our hearts melting into teares, and so be made of the number of the mourners, to helpe to pacifie the wrath, or to finde assured comfort in the evill day. Let us likewise be earnest suiters unto his holinesse to take from amongst us all the causes of our provocations, and chiefly of our so dangerous contentions, by which causes his spirit hath beene so grieved, the enemie so incouraged and strengthened, we so weakned, the soules of all the godly so troubled, and our praiers so generally hindered. And that he would be pleased to bring those our seduced brethren backe againe unto us, who by their looking only upon our enormities & wants, and forgetting the graces and tokens of the Lords glorious presence, yet still remaining amongst us, have so much endammaged both themselves and us, by departing from our outward communion and fellowship, and from so many benefits as by his mercy we therein doe enjoy. And to conclude, that we may henceforth labour by all loving and kinde usage, to retaine all such of Gods servants, who are truly mourners, (I meane all such as holy *Lot*) within the bosome of the Church: that so we all jointly as one man, sending up our cries in a united and firme love, may move his Majestie to continue his accustomed pitty, and to keepe the destroyer from ever entring in amongst us. That thereby we may remaine a most flourishing Church and nation to the end of the world.

1 *Pet.*3.7.

This may serve likewise, for the destroyers following hard at the heeles of the marking Angell, and what causes we have in this regard also to watch and pray day and night to prevent the Lords ensuing displeasure.

CHAP.

Chap. XI. Sect. 1.

The principall abominations and transgressions which moved the Lord to so severe a vengeance, and for which the godly so mourned; First set downe in generall, after more particularly. And what causes we have to watch and pray to be kept pure from them, and to obtaine pardon and redresse of them amongst our selves, or at least, that we may escape the plagues due thereunto.

Ezek. 9. 4.

Verse 5. *And smite, Let your eie spare none, neither have pittie.*]

The charge to the destroyers, to destroy without pitty.

Now are we come to the charge given to the destroiers for the manner of the execution of the Lords vengeance upon Ierusalem, and for the severitie of it. The charge is this; *That they smite and that they spare none, neither have any pitty: But to destroy utterly the old and the young, the maidens, the children and the women.* That is, every one that was found unmarked, for they must take speciall heed that they touch none of those: And to begin this slaughter at the Sanctuarie, even at those who did worship there. That they defile the house of God, the Temple first, and fill the courts with the slaine of them. So from thence to proceed, and make an utter dispatch and havock of all in the Citie. All which we shall see after, they executed accordingly.

Every word in the charge carieth an Emphasis.

In which manner of charge we are to observe, how every word seemeth to carry an emphasis, or vehemency in it. That they should goe, smite, spare none. The eye may seeme to be mentioned, because thereby in beholding the miseries of others, we are ordinarily moved to compassion. Each word intimateth that they should execute this vengeance without any commiseration, respect or pittie. Whence all must needs gather, and the Lord would have every one to ponder it well: That undoubtedly there was some hainous matter to provoke his Majestie, seeing his mercy is over all his workes, and that he is of such

The ſins muſt needs be hainous, provoking the Lord to ſo fierce a wrath.

ſuch infinite compaſſion, eſpecially toward his Church. They could not poſſibly be any pettie ſinnes, that could incenſe him to ſo heavie a vengeance as this was, and that againſt all ſorts, without any difference or regard: for the very barbarous ſouldiers in warre, though they be commonly moſt bloudily-minded; yet if they have either manhood, or the leaſt naturall affection, doe uſe to ſpare the ſilly women, and little children, chiefly the poore innocent babes, yea the aged alſo, the ſicke folkes and religious perſons, unleſſe the provocations be intolerable. To the end therefore that we may all be compeld to juſtifie the Lord in this moſt terrible deſtruction, though it be the very patterne of ſeveritie; we are carefully to inquire into the cauſes, thus farre moving his holineſſe againſt them, and that he ſhould thus proceed (as it may ſeeme) contrary to all his promiſes made unto Ieruſalem, and all his former mercies and compaſſions toward that people, above all the people of the earth.

To inquire into the cauſes.

Cauſes provoking in general.
1. Their abominations.
2. That no meanes could reclaime them.
The abominations cõmitted by all ſorts.

The generall cauſes were two principally. As firſt, Their ſhamefull abominations: *verſ.* 4. for which the godly ſo mourned. And ſecondly, That all the meanes uſed to reclaime them, as his word, chaſtiſements, benefits, deliverances, and whatſoever, could doe them no more good, but that they were paſt all hope of returning. For the abominations; becauſe they were committed by all ſorts, ſtates and degrees, both Prieſts and people; therefore is the charge ſo ſevere and peremptorie, againſt all, without exception of any, ſave of the mourners alone.

1. The Prieſt.

Firſt, againſt the Prieſts and Prophets, as we ſhall ſee all theſe after particularly; becauſe they neither gave the people warning of theſe their ſins, and the vengeance to come for the ſame: nor taught them as they ſhould; but contrarily hardned them in their iniquitie, crying ſtill unto them, *Peace, peace, and all is well.* Secondly, becauſe they by all meanes ſought the diſgrace of the true Prophets, as of *Ieremie*, and the reſt, and only to bring them into hatred; for that theſe diſcovered the iniquities of the Land, and proclaimed the deſolation ruſhing upon them, to have ſaved them thereby from theſe miſeries; and thus indeed they condemned all thoſe flatterers and time-ſervers.

Secondly,

Secondly, the charge is so grievous against the People; because they likewise, for most part, delighted in these flatterers; accounting them the only men of those times, and hated all Gods true and faithfull Prophets to the death, abusing them to the uttermost, for telling them so plainly of their sinnes.

2. The People.

Thirdly, it is so strict against the Ancients, and men in authoritie, because they used not their authoritie to restraine the wicked, and to reforme the abominations, as they ought, neither by faithfull execution of the lawes of God committed to them, nor by their good examples. But that rather in stead thereof, they incouraged all the lewdest and wickedest, yea, all sorts under them, by their impunitie and evill example. And for that they turned the edge of their authoritie against the innocent to oppresse and grieve them, to make them sigh unto the Lord, as it will appeare after in each particular.

3. The Ancients.

Mich. 3.2.

Fourthly, against the Women, either because they allured and provoked their husbands unto these abominations; or practised them themselves; or at least consented thereunto.

4. The Women.

Ierem. 44.15.

Fiftly and lastly; It might justly be so dreadfull against even the little children, either because they being corrupted by their fathers bad ensample, were running on in their fathers evill waies, to fill up the measure of their fore-fathers iniquitie: or for that they were the viperous generation of so venomous a brood. And to comprize all briefly: All these sinnes, which the Lord had so long threatned them for, by his Prophets, *Esay*, *Ieremie*, *Hosea*, *Micha*, *Zephanie*, and others, being now full ripe, the Lord thus thrusts in his sickle, to reape them downe altogether. For we are not to imagine, that this lamentable destruction came upon them, for the sinnes of one yeare or two; but that (as was touched) it was the full accomplishment of the former denuntiation of the Lords vengeance, for the sinnes of that Nation, even of old time; especially, the fulfilling of that heavie judgement, threatned by the Prophet *Esay*, as he was commanded by the Lord, to denounce it against them: That *by hearing they should heare and not understand, and seeing, they should see and not perceive*, but still wax worse and worse, untill this utter desolation was fully accomplished upon them. So the Prophet *Ieremie* doth plainly acknowledge it in the person

5. The Children.

Exod. 20.5.

Matth. 23.32, 33. And now for that their sins were full ripe.

Isai. 6.9,10,11.

Lament. 2.17.

perſon of the Church in his Lamentations: *That the Lord had done that which he had purpoſed; he had fulfilled his owne word, which he had determined of old time.*

The Prophets to be diligently read, to behold the ſins which brought the vengeance. *Zech.* 8. 3, 4.

Now if we would take the paines, to reade over with reverence and with conſcience, but thoſe worthy Prophets, who lived betweene that denuntiation of that vengeance by *Eſay*, untill this execution; we might there behold ſuch a full view of the abominations particularly, as the Lord ſhewed unto this our Prophet *Ezechiel*, when he lifted him up betweene the heavens and the earth. And ſecondly, if in reading we would compare our times thereunto, and then ſhould finde that the Lord doth in ſo lively a manner picture out unto us very much, the iniquities of our owne daies, as if thoſe Prophets had lived amongſt us at this day, and propheſied againſt us, (as even by that which followeth will evidently appeare,) we might hereby certainly know, that this is left recorded for us, and the ſame judgements in effect, or more fearefull, to remaine for us, unleſſe we ſpeedily meet the Lord by humble repentance. And moreover, that theſe are our Prophets at this day, either to admoniſh and turne us from all our evill wayes, and ſo to prevent the like wrath; or to make our condemnation ſo much the more juſt, and our plagues the more terrible, if the Lord ſhall in his juſtice execute them upon us. This ſo done, muſt needs rouze us out of our deepe ſecuritie, and drive us to meet him, being humbled upon our faces, before that he ſhould come thus fiercely upon us. But alas, what hope is there, that in theſe daies of ſo deepe ſecuritie, and when all men cry *Peace, peace*, and thinke that now we ſhall not come into any more ſuch danger as heretofore, nor ſee any more evill; that now, I ſay, we ſhould once bethinke our ſelves of any ſuch a taske, as to ſearch the Prophets to finde out our iniquities, and Gods threatnings againſt us. We have ſundry evident cauſes to make us altogether to deſpaire of any ſuch a ſearch to be taken up by us. As firſt, for that we have ſo generally, in moſt places caſt off ſuch holy exerciſes, as is the private reading of the word of the Lord, and doe make but a ſcorne of it, or a tricke of preciſeneſſe, or ſome hypocriticall ſhew of holineſſe. And ſecondly, which is far worſe; for that nothing in ſundry places

We may ſee our owne iniquities portraid out in them.

And the Prophets ours at this day.

To cauſe us to meet the Lord.

Little hope of any ſuch ſearch to be made by us in theſe daies of ſecuritie.

Reaſons hereof.

1.

2.

is more noted or jested at, than for a private Christian so much as to be seene to carrie a Bible, the holy Booke of God. And thirdly, which is worst of all, sith that Atheisme, Poperie, and extreme profanenesse, have so farre prevailed with us in most places abroad in many Countries (howsoever our chiefe Cities, and some few other places moe, in Gods mercie, have escaped) as to make multitudes of us to be ashamed of our glorie, even of the Lord himselfe, and his sacred truth, that we should be noted for any zealous or conscionable profession of it, as was shewed before; that the Lord may indeed most justly for this sin alone, be ashamed of us, as he hath threatned.

3.

Marc. 8. 38.

In the due consideration therefore of these things, and the like, I have here in the fourth place, thought it to be my best service, that ever I could performe unto the Lord and his Church, with my deare Countrey, First, to helpe to search out carefully these abominations, and then to set them in their rankes, to the view of all the world; together with the severall denunciations, which the Lord threatneth for the same particularly. Secondly, to shew the meanes which he used to reclaime and turne them, both by his word, his judgements and mercies, that he might have spared them. And lastly, to set before our eyes, the fearefull miseries that he brought upon all sorts, when neither the discoverie of the iniquities, nor the sharpe comminations of his severe vengeance, nor yet all other meanes could doe them any more good. That so all sorts of us may be admonished at the least by this or the like, as by one speciall meanes yet remaining, and appointed by the Lord hereunto, when all other faile.

My endevour to this end.

1. To set out the sins in their ranks, with the denuntiations belonging to them.
2. The meanes God had used to reclaime them.
3. The miseries which they endured.
Ierem. 36. 2, 3. to 7. & 23. 22. *Lament.* 2. 14.
When no meanes would serve.
This for the good of all sorts.

And in the first place for the wicked, who have beene the chiefe in provoking the Lords wrath by their horrible sins; that they, at the least some of them, seeing the Lord himselfe to display their owne abominable lives and dreadfull estate in the iniquities and estate of this people of Iudah, may repent them speedily of their evill wayes, and so may helpe to pacifie the anger, or at least be hid themselves in the evill day. Or if no warning can serve, but that they will needs still rush on forward, to increase the transgressions, that they may be made hereby more inexcusable, having beene so plainly admonished before.

1.
Of the wicked sinners.

2. For the godly.

Secondly, for the godly and wise-hearted, and all who love the Church of God, and our native Countrey, that we may everie one see our owne particular sins, whereby we doe hasten the judgement, and endanger our selves, hindering the power of our prayers, and each first begin to reforme our owne wayes. And then that by beholding our monstrous abominations, together with the threatning of the vengeance (which are in truth our first and most dreadfull enemies, and the most terrible Armies of the Lord, marching furiously towards us for our destruction) we may all be stirred up to bitter mourning for all our sins, and may fall upon our faces, as *Moses* and *David*, and with *Samuel* cry both day and night more instantly in the eares of the Lord, to stay his hand; yea, to take away these our sins, that he may turne away the armies of his plagues and threatnings from us; and so finally, that he may remaine our gracious Protector to the comming of his Sonne.

This is here sought, that it may be performed more faithfully, as we are all to begge it of the Lord, because he hath ordained the discoverie of the iniquities of a people, to be a principall meanes, to turne away their Captivitie, as we may see in the places noted in the margent, and as we shall have further occasion after.

*Lament.*3.39.
*Lament.*2.14.
*Ierem.*23.22.
*Ierem.*36.3,4.

God hath ordained such a discoverie of the iniquitie, as a last meanes to turne away a judgement.

To this end therefore, seeing this so neerely concerneth everie one of us, we are each, who shall reade or heare this, setting aside all prejudice and partialitie, to remember we have to deale with him, against whom there is no quarrelling: and so to apply all first to our owne soules and consciences, and after to the severall sorts and conditions amongst us: and then to bethinke our selves, whether we doe not in sundry of the provocations justifie them of Iudah, and in what particular impieties we are not now matchable, or have not beene heretofore in the dayes of Idolatrie, when the bloud of Gods servants was shed without any pitie, yet whether we doe not in many other abominations goe cleane beyond them. Chiefly; we are still to remember that; in what a glorious light of the Gospell we live, and how it hath beene maintained and upholden after such manifold warnings, wonderfull deliverances, purposes and promises of our amendment. That here is no aiming at any mans person or

particular

particular calling; but only at the sinnes, which will surely be the damnation of everie sinner. And that each of us are to consider our selves charged and cited by the Lord himselfe, who hath so oft come so neere unto us in judgement, and yet spared us hitherto; and who hath never beene wont to threaten or to terrifie his, but upon just cause, or without further proceeding, except there have followed unfained repentance.

If we be cleare of these abominations, we have no such cause of feare; but if we finde that we are guiltie, then are we to looke to our selves in time, and to hearken to his counsell; that this and other like forewarnings, which we have had and doe heare daily sounding in our eares, be not unto us, as they were unto this people, nor as the warnings of our Saviour were to them, before their last desolation, that *hearing we should heare and not understand*, untill his anger be so kindled against us, as that there be no remedie.

In searching out and setting downe these abominations, we are to begin at the Sanctuarie, at the sinnes of the Priests and the Prophets, as the Lord bids the destroying Angell to begin to smite there, and to defile it first, to fill the Courts with the slaine of them. And herein we are to inquire, why he giveth such charge to begin there, to proceed after to the rest in order. But yet here againe must some speciall cautions be premised, to guide us aright in the whole progresse thorow each particular.

This discovery to be begun at the Sanctuarie, where the vengeance must begin.

Sect. 2.

Some speciall cautions, that nothing be mistaken or misapplied, which might cause us thereby to imagine, that they doe not belong to us; that so still we should turne this as all our forewarnings to our further hardening.

Cautions in shewing these abominations and sins.

First, we are to remember in reading, That some of those sinnes were committed long before the Captivitie, yea, before the dayes of *Iosiah*; as all the chiefe Idolatrie, and shedding of the innocent bloud, (whereby God was so provoked) were specially in the dayes of *Manasses*, the grandfather

1. Some of them were committed long before the Captivitie.

of *Iosiah*, and in the dayes of other Kings before him, as was noted before; yet all of these helped to bring the Captivitie. And more also, for that many of the people lived in the same sinnes still secretly, even in the dayes of *Iosiah*; and for that they had not repented of them unfainedly, neither was their Land purged of them; but the people did in their hearts long after them, as will manifestly appeare in the sequell.

2. Secondly, how their sinne was increased by 1. *Hezekiahs* reformation.

Secondly, we are to consider, how their iniquitie was increased wonderfully: first, by the gracious reformation made by *Hezekiah* the great grandfather of *Iosiah*; and afterward by the Captivitie and terrible judgement that came upon *Manasses* his sonne, and upon Iudah, for going backe and setting up againe that Idolatrie, which his father had destroyed. After that, it was still made more hainous, by the repentance of *Manasses*, the wonderfull and mercifull bringing him backe forth of fetters into his throne, upon the same his repentance, and his restoring of Gods true religion againe. And yet more also: That notwithstanding his repentance and reformation, with their deliverance from the slaverie wherein they were, and their seeing the vilenesse of that Idolatrie discovered, together with the holinesse of Gods true religion shewed openly, which was set up in place of it; yet they could not be brought thorowly to hate that filthie abomination, and to turne truly unto the Lord. But most of all was their sinne made so sinfull and inexcusable, by the worthie reformation of holy *Iosiah*, taking away as much as he could, all the abominations out of the Land; and by his compelling all to enter into a firme league and covenant, to serve the Lord according to his word. And lastly, by all those faithfull Prophets, whose propheſies we have; and by others whom God raised up extraordinarily about that time; moe of them together, than ever it seemeth at any one time before; and all to have prevented these plagues, by bringing the people to repentance, if it had beene possible.

2. By *Manasses* his back-sliding, punishment, repenting, and deliverance.

3. By the reformation of *Iosiah* most of all.

4. By so many Prophets raised up so extraordinarily a little before this.

Thirdly, we must beare in minde; That all the people did not commit those sins: for in every age they had sundry who mourned for all the wickednes of the rest; even then when they were at the very worst, as at this marking; especially in the dayes of that holy *Iosiah*, it could not be, but that there were verie

3. That all the people did not commit these sins, but many of them.

many

many truly godly, as we heard before. But only that a great part of the people did defile themselves in the abominations, and chiefly all those, who by reason of their place or greatnesse, had power in their hands: in whom the dispositions and affections of all the rest did evidently appeare.

4. The sinnes of a few unpunished, sufficient to bring this or as heavie a vengeance.

Fourthly, we must understand thorowout, that those notorious abominations committed but by a few of them, and approved of or suffered by the rest, were sufficient (as evidently appeareth) to bring the vengeance of God upon all, as being indeed the sinnes of all of them, who hearing, or any way knowing of them, did not mourne or cry for them, seeking the redresse of them, and the pacifying of the Lord; as was shewed before in the generall directions for the use hereof, and in the last reason why the godly so mourned.

5. Their pangs of repentance were but for fits.

Fifthly, we must remember withall, that though they had sometimes a little relenting by fits, and some good motions and purposes; yea, some zeale, as in *Hezekiahs* and *Iosiahs* dayes, at the pulling downe and defacing of that filthy Idolatry, wherewith God was so provoked, and at the setting up Gods true religion and worship (as it did declare it selfe in those times in their indignation against all the monuments of Idolatrie, and at some other times, as in their bondage, their dangers, and strange deliverances) yet their goodnesse was but as a morning dew. They waxed worse and worse, presently starting backe in their hearts, their eyes were more blinded after, and their hearts more hardned, as *Esay* had denounced: so that they turned backe to approve of their former wickednesse, as their fore-fathers, turning in their hearts, into Ægypt againe, untill this desolation came upon them.

Psal. 78. 34, 35, &c. *Hos.* 5. 15. & 6. 4.

Isai. 6.

6. That here are mentioned the principall sins after *Ezekiahs* reformation, for which this judgement is specially denounced.

Sixtly, that though we cannot set downe nor prosecute every sinne at large, which caused or increased the wrath; for that would grow to over-great a volume: yet here are most of the principall provocations, which angred the Lord, and prepared the way to this plague, from about the time of restoring of Gods Religion, and destroying Idolatrie in the dayes of *Hezekiah*, which he expresly complaineth of, and for which he threatneth this Captivitie, in all these Prophets, sent to give them warning for threescore yeeres together or more, before this

vengeance came, even from that denuntiation by the Prophet *Esay*.

Isai.6.8,9.

7. The order observed in setting downe the sinnes. *Ier.* 11. 1,2,3,4.

Seventhly, In the order of setting downe the abominations, we have observed these three things commonly, in some of them more at large, in others more briefly. 1. The Covenant, that they had entred into, and often renewed with the Lord. 2. Their transgression against it. 3. Their punishment threatned by the Lord proportionable to their sinne. So these things are to be considered and remembred of us continually in the reading.

Three things to bee still thought of, in reading these, for application to our selves.

1. That the Covenant thorowout is ours, aswell as theirs.

First, that the Covenant thorowout is ours, as well as it was theirs: That we of this nation have entred into it at our first receiving the Gospell and religion of the Lord. And we have oft renewed it more solemnly: as namely, in part in the dayes of King *Henry* the eighth, even as they did in the dayes of *Hezekiah*, at the setting up againe of Gods religion, and the discoverie and first beginning to destroy that Romish Idolatrie, and to deliver us from that Ægyptian slaverie. This we did yet more also in the dayes of that holy King *Edward*, at the destroying of other of the remainders of that cursed Idolatrie, and the further purging our Land, and advancing the Lords truth amongst us. And after that, much more at the entrance of our late tender nursing mother, Queene *Elizabeth*; when the Lord had by her hand redeemed us from those bloudie daies of *Manasses*, wherein he had let us become slaves againe to that Romish tyrannie, for our unthankfulnesse, and shewed us yet more apparently, the furious rage and filthinesse of that cruell Whore of Babylon. This Covenant we have seemed lastly most of all to renue, in our so miraculous deliverances by his Anointed Servant, our dread Soveraigne; which we have witnessed in so many thanksgivings, with protestations and good lawes set forth hereupon against Poperie, and for the advancement of Christs glorious Gospell, to remaine as evidences against us perpetually, unlesse we doe confirme the same. To omit, that everie one of us of this Nation, have severally entred into the same Covenant at our Baptisme, before the holy Angels, and the Congregations, and renued it in the Lords Supper, taking the Sacrament upon it, so binding our selves more firmely thereunto.

unto. And most of us at many other times besides in our private prayers, thanksgivings, and other holy meditations. So that we are everie way as much bound unto the Covenant as ever Iudah was, and even for this may the Lord justly proceed to as severe a vengeance against us, for our transgression of it, as ever against them, in what sort shall please him.

Secondly, we must remember in reading their transgressions against the covenant, to weigh well with our selves, how farre we have proceeded to anger the Lord in the like, especially since that our solemne renuing of the Covenant, when we last received the Gospell, and that God restored to us the light againe, and so displayed before the eyes of all, the vilenesse of that Romish Idolatrie. To the end that wherein we are presently guiltie or have beene heretofore and are not as yet purged, we may speedily repent, and in what we are rushing on, that we may stay our selves forthwith, before we hale and bring the vengeance upon our heads.

2. In the transgressions to bethinke us, how farre we have proceeded to anger the Lord since he set up the Gospell againe and destroyed Idolatrie.

Thirdly, in setting downe the punishment threatned proportionally to everie severall sinne, we are to consider, that we being guiltie of the same or the like, though in lesse measure, the like punishment belongeth unto us, or farre more heavie, at least in some other kinde, in as much as we live in the dayes of farre cleerer light, and wherein the Gospell (as we heard) offereth more grace to resist; and therefore our sinne must of necessitie be much more increased: first, for this glorious light, and then also because this their ensample and all others heretofore, with all his so fatherly warnings and gracious meanes have done no more good.

3. That the same punishment or a more heavie must needs belong to us, if we be guiltie of the same or the like sinnes.

These things thus thought of, this may yet helpe as a speciall meanes amongst others sent in the riches of Gods mercie, to rouze us out of our deepe securitie, when we shall evidently see in what estate we stand, through our most hainous sinnes, even under the drawne sword of the Lords vengeance; and how fearefully he shaketh it, against us unlesse we repent speedily. That so while there is time, we may all meet him with intreatie of peace. And thus will we proceed to that which followeth, even unto the Abominations in order, which so provoke the Lord.

Fruit of these, thus thought of.

Sect. 3.

Why the vengeance must begin at the Sanctuarie.

Why the vengeance must begin at the sanctuary, *viz.* Because from thence all the wickednesse proceeded. *Ier.* 23.11.

TO begin therefore with the Sanctuary, that is, with the Priests and Prophets, and those whose office was about the holy things of God, where the destroyers were commanded to beginne and to defile the house of God first. Their sinnes no doubt must needs have beene intolerably great, and even the very chiefe of all the rest, and therefore they are so much the more carefully to be inquired into, why the Lord should command to begin there.

Their wickednesse strengthened all other in their sinnes. *Vers.* 12. 14. 17. 22. 15.

The Prophet *Ieremie* hath set them downe in generall thus. *That both the Prophet and the Priest did wickedly, they were become Hypocrites*, meaning that the greatest part of them were such, *and God had found their wickednesse in his house*, and therefore *he would bring upon them the yeere of their visitation, even this same visitation here spoken of.* And he saith moreover of them, *that they strengthened the hand of the wicked*, to wit, by their wicked lives and ensamples, as also by their flatteries, in stead of admonishing them of their sins. *So that they could not turne from their evill waies. That from them wickednesse went out into all the Land.* This vengeance therefore most justly begins at them, and must proceed from them to the rest, like as the iniquitie had done. And for that they had beene the meanes to murther and destroy all the rest by their evill courses and examples, whereas they should have beene the onely men to have preserved all the rest, even all the people of the Lord.

As wickednes went from them, so must the vengeance begin.

The first Abomination.

The horrible wickednesse of their Priests and Prophets generally angring the Lord and bringing the Captivitie.

What holines the Lord requires of the Priests and Prophets.

Covenant] This first is a principall part of the Covenant, that the Priests had entred into with the Lord, to have beene the holiest of all his people, and in stead of all the first borne (whom he had sanctified unto himselfe) to beare his

his name. To be his ambaſſadours, his owne mouth, and as his owne Majeſtie unto his people. They onely were to approach neere unto him, to doe his ſolemne ſervice; ſo as none elſe might touch any of the holy things of the Lord. They alone were by their praiers and ſacrifices to appeaſe his wrath towards the reſt, and after a ſort to beare the ſinnes of the people. All things therfore belonging to their function were to teach them holineſſe, as both the legall garments of their miniſtration, their often waſhings and purifyings, with many other rites and ceremonies of the Law; In like manner alſo the care that muſt be in their election and admiſſion, that none that had any deformity, or blemiſh, or whatſoever elſe might diſgrace him or his miniſtrie any way, might be admitted to that function. Beſides theſe, the ſtrict charge that God gave, that they above all other ſhould be holy, who beare the veſſels of the Lord. And this moſt ſevere denunciation, that he would be ſanctified in them, of all other, that drew neere unto him in that ſervice, as he had beene upon *Aarons* ſonnes, for an example to all poſteritie for offering with fire not appointed unto them.

Numb. 3. 13. *Mal.* 2. 7. *Numb.* 3. 7.

All things were to teach them holineſſe. *Levit.* 21. 16, 17. *Deut.* 23. 1, 2.

They were charged to be holy: denunciation elſe. *Iſay* 52. 11. *Levit.* 10. 1.

They ſhould therefore have beene moſt heavenly minded of all other, leaſt minding the world, moſt contented with their portions aſſigned of the Lord, moſt temperate, holy and precious to the Lord. So tenderly affected towards his people being in his place, as to have ſought to beare them as nurſes in their boſomes, and that from them holineſſe might have flowed to all the reſt.

Exod. 19. 4.

This was the ſumme of their covenant ſtanding upon all holy equitie, and that in effect which God will ſurely require of all, who ſhall ſucceed in their place unto the end of the world to be for him unto his people, and ſuch they were in the beginning.

Mal. 2. 5, 6. *Deut.* 32. 9.

Tranſgreſſion] Now cleane contrary, They were many of them, (as the Lord oft complaineth of them) of the wretchedeſt of all other; For firſt, through long eaſe and proſperitie, in ſtead of that holy contentment, which they ſhould have had, with their portions aſſigned unto them by the Lord, and of rejoicing in him, as their chiefe portion, and of minding heavenly things: they (it ſeemeth) very generally became the moſt unſatiably covetous of all others: ſo that the Lord cals them greedy dogs, that

Tranſgreſſiõ. They were the wretchedeſt of all other, and how.

1. Being moſt covetous. *Iſay* 56. 11.

that could never have enough. They set their mindes on nothing but the earth, nothing but their owne commoditie and advantage. Secondly, in stead of humilitie, for drawing so neere to God, and tendernesse towards his people, they became most intolerably proud and insolent, as the Pharisees their successors in the time of our Saviour. And that even over and towards all those, whom they did deceive by their flatteries, and whose substance they devoured: for so saith the Prophet *Micha*; That howsoever they would *crie peace*, peace, when they might swallow up all at their pleasure; yet *if a man put not into their mouthes, they would prepare warre against him.* Thus they ruled over the poore people with *crueltie and rigour*, as *Ezekiel* complaines of their pastours. Moreover in stead of giving unto their people a good ensample, by their sobrietie and temperance, they gave over themselves to all excesse in riot and belly-cheere, saying one to another, *Come and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant, I will bring wine and we will fill our selves with strong drinke.* And what must needs follow upon their wine, strong drinke and excesse, to make them yet more vile and odious, but that uncleannesse and filthinesse in many of them, which *Ieremie* so cries out of, *That he had seene in the Prophets of Ierusalem, filthinesse; they committed adulterie, and walked in lyes, and thus strengthned the hand of the wicked, that none could turne from his wicked way.* So that the Lord complaines of them, that in stead of being unto him the most precious of his people, and a meanes to keepe the rest in his favour, they chiefly were *unto him as Sodom, and as the people of Gomorrha*, the loathsomest of all other, and the principall men to provoke him against all the rest; whereupon it could not be, but that all sorts must needs abhorre the sacrifices of the Lord, as they did sometimes for the wickednesse of *Elies* sonnes, whom in all things many of these did resemble.

2. Proud and insolent.

Mich. 3. 5, 6.

Ezech. 34. 4.

Given to all excesse.

Esay 56. 12.

Thereupon many of them most uncleane.

Ierem. 23. 14.

Whence they were to God as Sodom.

Ierem. 23. 14.

And so must needs make the people most vile.

1. *Sam.* 2. 13, 17, 22, 23.

Threatning.

Ier. 26. 18.

Mich. 2. 11, 12.

Threatning] Now for this sinne the Lord threatned them long before by the Prophet *Micha*, in the daies of good King *Ezechiah*: That Sion, the chiefe place of Gods worship, where the Sanctuarie was, which they had so defiled, should be plowed as a field, and the mountaine of the house of the Lord should be as the high places of the forrest. Also for the false Prophets

and

and wicked Prieſts, he denounceth, that as they were bitter and loathſome unto him, ſo *he would feede them with wormewood, and make them to drinke the water of gall.* He would give them bitterneſſe of ſoule enough for all their abundance of their filthy pleaſures, wherein they had thus wallowed, neither regarding the pacifying of his wrath, nor the ſaving of his people. *Jerem.* 23.15.

The application I leave to our owne ſoules, and to every one who would eſcape, or helpe to prevent the wrath to come: and whether we have any cauſe hence to watch and pray. It is good for us to apply all to our ſelves, to prevent the Lords application.

Abomination 2.

The blindneſſe of the Prieſts and the Prophets haſtning the Captivitie.

Covenant] Secondly, for the Prieſts and the Prophets: Whereas the Lord had honoured and preferred them in theſe things above the reſt: First, in that he had taken them out of all his people to be his meſſengers unto the reſt: He had ſet them up to be his Seers and his watchmen, for the warning and preſerving of every ſoule committed unto them, by declaring unto them their particular ſinnes, with the threatnings and judgements againſt them for the ſame: Hereby he had ordained them to turne away the plagues, by turning his people from their evill way, and by directing and guiding them in all the waies of God; denouncing unto them, that otherwiſe he would require the bloud of his people at their hands. And ſome ſuch Seers and watchmen they had ever unto the very day of their laſt Captivitie; eſpecially in the daies of thoſe worthy Kings, *Hezechiah* and *Ioſiah*, they muſt needs have ſundry ſuch as we heard. Yet let us conſider the Lords complaint againſt them herein.

Covenant. Prophets, Seers.

Mal. 2.7.

Ezech. 3.17, 18.

To prevent the plagues.

Jer. 23.22.

Lament. 2.14.

Ezech. 3.17, 18.

Tranſgreſſion] The Lord complaines of them, that through their peace and proſperitie, and by minding nothing, but their owne advantage, their eaſe, and their bellies, they became generally blinde. Either they grew to be ſuch as were not able to teach the people at all, no more than little Children; and this was

Tranſgreſſiō. Seers blinde.

Eſay 56.11.

was the greateſt part of them: Or elſe ſuch, as though they were learned in the Law of the Lord, as they commonly bragged, and ſome were undoubtedly; yet they became ſo blinde and ſenſleſſe, in applying the ſame to themſelves and their people, that moſt of their chiefe Seers were not able to ſee their owne ſinnes, and fearefull eſtate; much leſſe the ſinnes and eſtate of the people, as they ſhould: and therefore how was it poſſible, that they ſhould behold the vengeance of God haſtening upon them, or that ſpirituall judgement that covered them all? Yet it ſeemeth that they were generally drunken with a conceit of their learning and ſufficiencie, even moſt of the meaneſt of them, and conſequently of their happie eſtate: and that the people under the worſt of them, thought themſelves in as good an eſtate as the beſt (as we may ſee it too uſuall and lamentable in moſt ſuch in our dayes.) For theſe and the like were their conceits; *We are wiſe*, and *The Law of the Lord is with us.* And this, even then when the Lord ſaith, The pen of the Scribes was in vaine, And that they rejected the word of the Lord: Yea, they uſed to glorie thus, *The Law ſhall not periſh from the Prieſt, nor counſell from the wiſe, nor the word from the Prophet*: whereupon, and upon their crying *Peace, peace*, the people muſt needs be beſotted to remaine in their ſinnes, without any remorſe, or feeling of their miſerable condition, or any feare of this judgement, untill it overwhelmed them. This the Prophet *Eſay* ſets out at large, crying to all the people thus: Stay your ſelves and wonder: *They are blinde, and make you blinde: they are drunke, but not with wine: they ſtagger, but not with ſtrong drinke: for the Lord hath covered you all with the ſpirit of ſlumber, and hath ſhut up your eyes; the Prophets and your chiefe Seers hath he covered.* And wherein had he covered them? *They failed in viſion; They ſtumbled in judgement. So that the viſion of them all unto the people, was become, as the words of a booke that is ſealed up, which they deliver to one that can reade, ſaying, Reade this, I pray thee. Then he ſhall ſay, I cannot, for it is ſealed. And the booke is given unto him that cannot reade, ſaying, Reade this, I pray thee, and he ſhall ſay, I cannot reade:* ſhewing plainly, that in this reſpect, they were for moſt part all alike; that is, for any powerfull and effectuall underſtanding to doe them good: to wit, for any true ſenſe

Iſa. 29 9,10. Not able to ſee their own ſins, or the peoples.

Yet drunke with a conceit of their happie eſtate.

Ierem. 8.8,9.

Ierem. 18.18.

Whereby all the people muſt needs remaine as they did.

Iſai. 29.9.

Iſai. 28.7. & 29 11.

Their viſion as of a booke ſealed up.

ſenſe of their horrible wickedneſſe, and the judgements of God due thereunto, or for any cleere ſight of the evident tokens of the Lords anger. So that the chiefe of them were blinded and drunke with the world and with conceitednes through the ſpirituall drunkenneſſe that they were in. Of this very ſinne *Eſay* complaines yet more grievouſly in another place; *That their watchmen were all blinde*, not one but all, that is, all in reſpect, meaning the greateſt part of them, not all: For they had both himſelfe, with the Prophet *Micha*, and other worthy men at that time. After he ſhewes how they were blinde. *They had no knowledge*, (that is) no true holy ſaving knowledge of the dreadfull eſtate wherein their people ſtood preſently in impenitency under Gods curſe, and the vengeance to come on them, or how to turne them from their evill way, ſo to prevent the Lords terrible judgement: For otherwiſe for knowledge, we ſaw before their uſuall glorying of their underſtanding in the word of the Lord, and, *How the law ſhould not depart from the Prieſts, nor underſtanding from the Prophet*. Whereby it is moſt evident; That ſundry of them had knowledge, but no ſenſe or feeling of that which they did know, which they ſhould have had. Nor grace to utter and uſe their knowledge, ſo as to cry out againſt the maine ſinnes of the Land, and to warne the people of the plagues that were comming on them.

Blinde guides and ſenſeleſſe all alike.

Eſay 28. 7.
Eſay 56. 11, 12.

Many of thoſe who have knowledge may be ſaid to have no knowledge.

Ier. 8. 8.
Ier. 18. 18.

Hereupon it was that in the ſame place, he calls all thoſe alike, *Dumbe dogges that could not barke*. They could not barke to give warning of the comming of the theefe, of the breaking in of the wilde beaſts of the Foreſt, the bloudy enemies of the Church, which were comming to deſtroy, nor of other plagues of God ruſhing upon them for their ſinnes. And alſo gives the reaſon for it, becauſe they were ſo ſet upon the world, and the glory of it had ſo dazeled their eyes, that they could not ſee, nor minde any thing elſe but the world. Here they did lie and ſleepe and delight in ſleeping, ſo as they could not attend to watch to give any warning. They could not underſtand, *viz:* ſo as to worke any conſcience or any feare of the Lord in the hearts of the people: for that, as the Holy Ghoſt ſaith there, They gave over themſelves wholly to all exceſſe, to feaſting and belly-cheere, inciting and provoking one another there-

Eſay 56. 10. Blind and ſenſleſſe men not giving warning of Gods vengeance termed dumbe dogs. *ver.* 11.

The world makes men blinde and dumbe when it favours them too much.

thereunto, as the Prophet brings them in, ſpeaking in the laſt verſe of that Chapter, in theſe words: *Come, ſay they, I will bring wine, and we will fill our ſelves with ſtrong drinke, and to morrow ſhall be as this day, and much more abundant.*

Eſay 56. 12.

Now theſe things being well conſidered, it was impoſſible indeed that they ſhould ſo underſtand, as to have any ſound feeling of that which they ſpake, and ſo to ſpeake with power, as to doe their people good, to turne their hearts unto the Lord, but cleane contrarily. In this palpable blindneſſe, they for moſt part remained in the very dayes of that holy *Ioſiah*, untill the vengeance came, doe the good King what hee could. Thus have we ſeene their blindneſſe. Now to come to the threatning.

Jerem. 23. 1.

Ierem. 8. 8, 9.

Threatning, That all their imagined wiſdome ſhould periſh. *Eſay* 29. 14. *Verſ.* 13.

Threatning | For a juſt recompence of this their blindneſſe, which all might wonder at, the Lord threatneth them by the Prophet *Eſay*, That proportionably to that their conceit, that they did thinke themſelves ſo wiſe and ſo quicke-ſighted, being indeed blinde, (ſith that all their chiefe wiſdome, and their feare, were but according to the precepts of men, to doe thoſe things which men injoyned, and chiefly in obſerving mens traditions and commandements, as our Saviour expoundeth it) but for Gods commandements, they drew neere unto him with their mouthes, and honoured him with their lips, doing onely an outward ſervice and hypocritically, but having removed their hearts from him: therefore *hee would worke amongſt them a marvellous worke, and a wonder,* for a recompence to them: which was this; *That the wiſdome of their wiſe men ſhould periſh:* Intimating chiefly (as I take it) that when the vengeance ſhould come upon them, then ſhould all their wiſdome be gone, and ſtand them in no ſtead. They ſhould then ſee that they had no true wiſdome at all; for that they had rejected the word of the Lord, uſing it but for a faſhion to ſerve the time, as we ſhall ſee after, and truſted onely to their owne wiſdome. And therefore as *Ieremie* askes, *what wiſdome could bee in them?* Or what could that wiſdome helpe them then, which had brought all the wrath upon them? For at that day they ſhould not know which way to turne, or to helpe themſelves, as the Lord menaceth them.

Matth. 15. 8, 9. *Eſay* 29. 13, 14.

Ierem. 8. 8. All wicked mens devices gone, when Gods vengeance comes.

All

All their policie and devices ſhould be gone. They ſhould then ſee the vanity of it, and how they had deceived themſelves and Gods people thereby. Furthermore alſo agreeably to the ſecond part of their ſinne, That their Watchmen and Shepheards were all ſo blinde, or elſe ſo faſt aſleepe, *the Lord calls all the beaſts of the field, and the wilde beaſts of the Foreſt*, that is, all the fierce and ſavage enemies, round about, to come to devoure their flocks, according to the very ſame which came upon them in the Captivitie. And this reaſon is given, why the beaſts ſhould come to devoure; becauſe *their watchmen were all blinde*, they could not deſcry the enemies, untill they were upon them; they were all *Dumbe dogges, and could not barke againſt them*, they were all faſt aſleepe in their pleaſures, and did delight in ſleeping. They looked ſo to their owne way, that they could not looke to the waies of God, to ſave the people of the Lord, nor themſelves, from that heavie deſtruction.

Eſay 56.9,10.

The blindneſſe and ſleeping of the Shepherds calls for the beaſts of the foreſt upon the flocks.

And thus much for a ſecond Abomination, the blindneſſe of their Prieſts and the Prophets haſtning the Captivitie.

The application hereof likewiſe, I leave to our owne hearts, to doe according to the former rules, chiefly conſidering the glorious light wherein we live, and whether we have no cauſe at all, even hence, to watch and pray, nay to cry earneſtly unto the Lord for feare of the like denunciation.

Application.

Abomination 3.

The flatterie of the Prieſts and Prophets hardening the people to deſtruction.

Covenant] The Prieſts and the Prophets being (as we heard) the Lords watchmen; Their Covenant with the Lord herein was this: To ſtand upon their walls and to diſcover both the ſinnes of the whole land in every eſtate and degree, ſo farre as it did concerne them, and thoſe to whom they ſpake,

Remember your Covenant you watchmen of the Lord, and be faithful with your God.

Iſay 62. 6. *Ezech.* 3. 17,18. The watchmen ought to give warning of the enemies and dangers. *Iſay* 58. 1.

ſpake, and ſo the iniquitie of every ſoule in their particular charges, with the judgements towards them. *To liſt up their voices as Trumpets, crying aloud and not ſparing, to ſhew the people their ſinnes, and the houſe of Iacob their tranſgreſſions.* Principally their chiefe tranſgreſſions and provocations moſt angring the Lord. Their duty was therefore to have declared their deſperate eſtate, wherein the people ſtood, for all the abominations of their Land, and in reſpect of the judgements of God both bodily and ſpirituall, that either were already upon them, or muſt needs come on them, according to the Lords moſt ſevere denunciations in his Law, and the often warnings of the Prophets. Hereby to have ſought by all poſſible meanes to have turned them from their evill way, both all of them in generall, and every one of them in particular, for the Lord had ordained this, as one of the principall meanes to turne away his wrath from his people, by turning them from their ſins and by making them to cry unto him to appeaſe his wrath.

Levit. 26. *Deut.* 28. To turne all from their ſins and to prevent Gods wrath.

Lament. 2. 14. The faithfull diſcovery of the iniquity the chiefe meanes to turne away the captivity.

This we may ſee in the Lamentations of *Ieremie*, *Lam.* 2. 14. where the Prophet bewailing the eſtate of Gods people in the Captivity complaineth thus hereof, as of a maine cauſe of all their miſerie: *Thy Prophets*, ſaith he, *have not diſcovered thine iniquitie to turne away thy Captivitie*; intimating thereby, that this faithfull diſcovery of the iniquitie by their watchmen, would have turned away that judgement, or at leaſt have ſurely mitigated it. Even ſo alſo ſpeaketh the Lord himſelfe of the falſe Prophets: If, ſaith he, *they had ſtood in my counſell and declared my words unto my people; then ſhould they have turned them from their evill waies and from the wickedneſſe of their inventions.* This is the very laſt meanes of all which God bids *Ieremie* to uſe, before the vengeance come, to the end that they might returne from their evill waies, and pray unto him that he might forgive their iniquity and ſin and ſo ſpare them. There the Lord chargeth the Prophet; That becauſe he himſelfe was there in priſon for his faithfulneſſe in his office, and ſo could not ſpeake unto them, that yet he ſhould write the iniquity, the curſes and plagues that were to come upon them, and *Baruch* ſhould reade them all upon their faſting day, in the houſe of the Lord, in the audience of all the people of *Iudah*, that

Ier. 23. 22.

Ier. 36. 2, 3.

came

came out of all their Cities, to that solemne humiliation, *It may be*, saith the Lord, *that the house of Iudah will heare of all the evils that I have determined to doe unto them, and returne every man from his evill way, that I may forgive their iniquitie and sinne.* And afterwards in the sixt verse of that Chapter *Ieremie* speaking unto *Baruch* to write at his mouth, and to reade to the people, as the Lord had commanded him; *It may be*, saith he, *that they will pray before the Lord, and every one returne from his evill way, for great is the anger that the Lord hath declared against this people.* Thus have wee seene the covenant and duties of the watchmen, which they had entred into with the Lord to performe unto him.

Ier. 36. 2,3,6,7.

The last means which God bids *Ieremie* use, viz. *Jeremy* to indite, *Baruch* to write from his mouth, and reade to the people upon the day of their fast to prevent the wrath.

Transgression.] To come now to their transgression. The Lord complaines that they for the most part, cleane contrarily, through their blindnesse, whereby they were utterly void of all sense of the iniquities of the times, or of Gods anger and judgement, and moreover by being extremely covetous and ambitious, did give over themselves to flattery; by all meanes to seeke to please and serve the times: and this they did generally, as doth plainly appeare, except a very few, who were therefore odious amongst all the rest. This flattery of theirs the holy Ghost sets out by these kinds of speeches and the like, *That they prophecied lyes in his name. And that they healed the hurt of his people with sweet words, crying peace, peace, and all is well, when there was no peace.* That is, when the people either at the admonitions and threatnings of the true Prophets, or some signes of Gods anger, or by any other meanes, began to see their sinne, and to be touched in conscience for them, and so to be humbled for feare of the judgement, and to seeke to prevent it; then came these flattering Priests and false Prophets, who being the blindest of all other, would perswade them straight-way that there was no such cause of feare, or of any danger, nor that there was any such matter to provoke Gods anger, as those foolish Prophets would beare them in hand. They assured them, that the other Prophets did but terrifie and discourage the people without any cause at all; seeing that all things were well in all estates and degrees. They themselves could see nothing amisse, no, not when all things were out of order. Thus

Transgressio. The Priests blinded and senseless gave over themselves to flatterie.

Isai. 8. 18.
Ierem. 5. 10,20.
Which flattery is called preaching lies.
Ierem. 14. 14.

Ierem. 6. 14. 14. 23.
Healing with sweet words.
Isai. 42. 19.
Ierem. 14. 13.
Ierem. 5. 12. &c.
Flatterers perswade that there is no cause of feare.

Jerem. 23. 17, 18, 19. Despisers of God, and obstinate sinners are strengthened by flatterers. *Ierem.* 23. 17.

did they still lull the people asleepe, by saying unto them, *You shall not see the sword nor famine, nor evill shall come unto you.* And this they did even then, when the tempest of the Lords wrath came rushing upon them as a mightie whirlwinde. Hereby did they strengthen them againe in their iniquity, that none could turne from their wicked way. They went so farre in this impietie, that they said unto those *who despised the Lord, The Lord hath said, that yee shall have peace; and unto euery one that walked after the stubbornnesse of his owne heart, they said, No evill shall come unto you.* And no marvell that they did thus: for they could see no evill to themselves, when they were in the case of the filthie *Sodomites*, Gods vengeance being ready to raine downe from heaven upon them, how then should they see it, towards the people, but they must needs flatter the people, as they flattered themselves. Our holy Prophet *Ezechiel* compares them for these their flatteries unto *Dawbers*. It is a base comparison, yet such as the Spirit of the Lord accounts the fittest for such preachers. Because they thus dawbed up the consciences of the poore people. Hee speakes of them thus contemptibly; *That one of them built up a wall, and another dawbed it with untempered morter.* That is, looke, what any one of those flatterers did affirme, to secure and harden the people against all feare, another of them would straight-way confirme it. The Prophet *Hosea* also compares such to fowlers, or to the snare of a fowler, because they were still by their flatteries catching for themselves, to bring all first into their owne net, which they chiefly intended, and after into the snare of Gods vengeance, and so to make all a prey to the common enemie, though they thought not so much, yet thus it must needs come to passe. Thus they set their nets, calling all unto them, with the sweetest words, as peace, peace; telling them of their dignities and prerogatives, and of the promises made to them above all other people, with the promises unto the Temple, crying, *The Temple of the Lord*, and because they had the Temple of the Lord, and his Law, therefore they could be in no danger.

They that flatter themselves must needs flatter others. *Ezech.* 13. 10, 11. Flatterers dawbers.

Flatterers fowlers. *Hosea* 5. 2. 8. 8.

They would make sure not to tell them of their sinnes, unlesse in a generall manner, so as should never come neere them,

nor

nor deliver any matter, which might any way trouble or offend them. But what things they knew would please them, those they would be sure to plie them withall. *Thus they sowed and layed pillowes*, that they might leane easily upon, and sleepe securely. For these intolerable flatteries the Lord himselfe compares them to hunters, yea, to theeves and murtherers, lying in wait and murthering by consent, by these their lies and flatteries. And saith, *There was a conspiracie of the Prophets, in the midst of them, like unto a roaring Lion ravening for his prey.* Thus, *They devoured soules, and tooke away the rich and pretious things, and made many widowes*, When the sword devoured their husbands in the Captivitie. The Lords addes moreover in that place; That the Priests, *Thus brake his Law, defiled his holy things, putting no difference betweene the holy and prophane*, when all were alike unto them, *neither betweene the cleane and uncleane. They hid their eyes from his Sabbaths, that he was prophaned amongst them.* All this it is evident, that they did chiefly to please all sorts, and that they might make sure to increase, or at least to keepe their wealth and reputation amongst them. In consideration of all which, the Prophet *Ieremie* laments, complaining thus unto the Lord, *Ah Lord God, behold the Prophets say unto the people, Yee shall not see the sword, neither shall the famine come upon you, but I will give you an assured peace in this place.* He also cries out, *That his heart did breake within him, his bones did shake for the presence of the Lord; Because these Prophets did strengthen the hands of the wicked, that none could turne from his wicked way.* Whereby he declareth evidently, that all the sinne and destruction of the people, was wholly from the wicked Priests and Prophets. And thereupon the Prophet speakes in the person of the Lord; *That these flatterers were unto him as Sodom*, that is, vile and odious. Howsoever the world accounted of them as the only Preachers; yet did he thus loath them, because they made the people as abominable and vile as themselves. He saith of them moreover, *That hee never sent them, but they prophecied a lye in his name, that hee might cast out that people, that both they might perish thereby and the Prophets, that prophecied lyes unto them.* And thus much for the transgression of their watch-

Flatterers hunters, theeves, murtherers, Lions.
Ezech.22.25.

Ezech.22.6.

Ierem.14.13.
The godly quake for this sinne.
Ierem.23.9, 14, 17, 18.

Flattering Prophets are unto the Lord as Sodome &c.

Ierem.27.15.

men in flattering the people, or not dealing faithfully with them.

The judgement for this sinne. *Ezech.* 13. 13.

Iudgement.] For the vengeance due to this sinne, the Lord threatneth these dawbers *to send such a storme on all their dawbing, that it should fall and over-whelme them.* Their dawbing should be the ruine of themselves, and of all who trusted in it. And whereas they had lulled all asleepe in securitie in regard of their strong wall about them, he tels them, *that the tempest of the Lords wrath, as a violent whirlewind, should fall upon the heads of them. The anger of the Lord should not returne, untill he had executed and performed the thoughts of his heart.* Besides, where these soothing Prophets had thus derided the sayings of the true Prophets, asking, *Who hath stood in the Lords councell, marked his words and heard it.* Hee foretels them that in the latter dayes, that is, when the day of vengeance came, they should then understand it plainly. And to be short, wheras these were unto him as loathsome as Gall and Wormewood, he tels them plainly, that he would *Feede them with Wormewood, and make them drinke the water of Gall*; meaning that they should have miseries enough, as bitter as Wormewood and Gall, and these should be their dainties to feed upon, and to quench their thirst in the Captivitie: as they had fed his people with their flatteries, which brought all this vengeance upon them, and made them so loathsome and odious unto himselfe.

Ierem. 23. 19, 20. Dawbers must looke for a storme to cause their worke to fall on them and on all who trust in it.

14.

15.

And thus much of this third Abomination, wherein the Lord warnes all such to repent in time; if they would not taste the bitter cup of his vengeance, or if they have any pitie or compassion of the rest.

Application.

The Application I commend to every soule, as in the presence of the Lord; that herein, as in all the rest, wee may seeke to pacifie his Majestie. The Lord awake us out of so deepe securitie.

Abomination 4.

The horrible contempt of the word of the Lord by the Prophets and Priests, rejecting it in their Sermons, and teaching in stead thereof the vanities of their owne braine.

Covenant. Gods Ministers his mouth to preach him only and his word, and to guide and save his people thereby. *Ierem.* 23. 28. *Malac.* 2. 7. *Ezech.* 3. 17. *Isai.* 52. 11. *Ier.* 23. 28, 29. 1 *Cor.* 2. 1.

COvenant.] Another part of the office and dutie of these Priests and Prophets was this, that seeing God had appointed them to be his mouth to speake to his people in his name, to rule and save them by his word, they ought to have taught that most faithfully; when as he had vouchsafed them this high dignitie, to stand in his place, and to be his owne mouth to his people, they should have preached him only, and his heavenly word, and have sought to make him great, by bearing his name before all sorts, and subduing all his people unto him, and in keeping them in obedience by the same word. They should have bent all their wits and studies thereunto: and in regard thereof to have delivered nothing unto the people, but the Lords owne counsell and word, being rightly fitted and applied to their particular estates and conditions. This they ought to have so done, that they might have beene able to have said in sinceritie, as the true Prophets doe ever, *Thus saith the Lord:* and also that hereby they might have honoured and extolled the word of the holy God, as the only true wisdome, the alone and all-sufficient instrument, for the spirituall guiding and saving of his people. Because hee had ordained this his word, being sincerely handled, to be the only powerfull meanes to humble his people, and to turne them from their evill way. He had given this as a perfect Law able to convert the soule. A word of power to wound and to destroy, to heale and to save. The Lord having also promised to accompany this only with his holy Spirit, and so to make it his owne arme, his sword, his arrowes, his mightie weapons, to bring every thought in his people to an holy obedience, and by it to destroy whatsoever resisteth it. To the end, that thereby that which is accounted the greatest foolishnesse of this heavenly wisdome (as the

To be able to say, *Thus saith the Lord.*

Ier. 23. 22, 28, 29.

Psal. 19. 8. Gods word sincerely preached, is accompanied with his Spirit, and the promises made to it. *Isai.* 49. 2. & 59. 21. *Zach.* 4. 6.

1 *Cor.* 1.25.

Apoſtle termeth it, ſpeaking after the manner of men) might be knowne to be wiſer than all the wiſdome of men; and the weakneſſe of it ſtronger to perſwade the heart, and to overcome, than all the eloquence and power of man. And hereupon the Lord had given a moſt ſtrait charge, that they ſhould neither adde any thing to it, nor take ought from it; but that which he had commanded, that to ſpeake, and that to doe alone.

Deut. 4.2. & 12. 32.

Tranſgreſſio. They rejecting the word of the Lord, delivered unto the people their owne devices.

Tranſgreſſion.] Now they to anger and provoke the Lord, dealt ſo with his Majeſtie herein, as in the former: for when theſe Prophets perceived, that the people waxed weary of the word of the Lord, in ſuch manner, as their fore-fathers in the wilderneſſe did of the heavenly Manna, and that they would not endure the power of it, nor ſuffer that it ſhould come neere unto their ſinne, and ſetting themſelves withall to pleaſe and to riſe in the world, they began to teach their owne devices. For thoſe amongſt them, who had fine tongues and more ſweet gifts (as will after appeare) did bend all their wits to invent what kinde of teaching might moſt pleaſe the people; and what veine they ſaw them to be delighted in, that they purſued with might and maine. For ſo doth the Lord often complaine in theſe Prophets, ſpecially in *Ieremie* to this effect; *That they caſt aſide the word of the Lord, and delivered their owne dreames*, even *chaffe in ſtead of wheat*. Whether they did caſt it aſide altogether in teaching the people, as being too light and baſe for their auditories, and ſo uſed the froth of their owne wit, or the writings and inventions of men in ſtead of it: Or whether they ſtill ſeemed to retaine the word; but yet wreſted and perverted to other ends, than ever God gave it for: Or whether they made it to ſpeake that, which the Holy Ghoſt never meant: Or elſe, whether they decked it gariſhly in painted and vaine eloquence, as ſome wanton ſtrumpet, to pleaſe the prophane hearts and eares of the wicked, and to ſet up themſelves, by making oſtentation of their owne learning and gifts. In ſome of theſe, or all of them, or the like, fit for the times, it is certaine that they ſinned moſt hainouſly, even to hale the vengeance of God upon themſelves and the people violently: So ſaith the Holy Ghoſt expreſly, in the Lamentations: where the Prophet bewailing the miſeries of the people in Captivitie, in ſhewing

Ierem 23 31. *Ierem.* 8. 9. 11. *Ier.* 23. 26, 27, 28

that

that it was so great, that it could not be uttered, and that it had rushed in upon them as a violent breach of the Sea, that could not be recovered, complaineth that this was a chiefe cause of it: *Thy Prophets* (saith hee) *have looked out vaine and foolish things for thee: they have not discovered thine iniquitie to turne away thy Captivitie; but have looked out for thee false prophecies and causes of banishment.* In which place the Holy Ghost declares plainly; first, what kinde of preaching they studied for: And secondly, hee shewes, that such a kinde of teaching, how excellent and learned soever it seeme to be, and whatsoever applause it hath in the world, yet it is nothing else before God, but meere vanitie and foolishnesse. Thirdly, that it is so much the worse, when they say, *Thus saith the Lord*, as the Prophets ever used to doe; which is not only vanitie and deceit, but intolerable lying, to say, He saith that, which he never spake. Lastly, that it is a principall cause, and an evident signe and fore-runner of banishment or miserie to come upon a people, especially when a people doth principally delight therein. And in truth, how can it be otherwise? To reject the eternall wisdome and word of God, which the Angels doe admire, and which shakes not only the earth, but also the heavens, and to set up in place of it, the foolishnesse and weaknesse of man. Or to make the holy and heavenly word of the Lord, not only a disguised and painted strumpet, but also to prostitute it to serve every sinfull mans most vile affections. Certainly, that the great and glorious Lord God can never endure this sinne of all sinnes, very reason will teach it. And that this is the meaning of this place, and that it was also a most ordinary sinne before the Captivitie, preparing the way unto it, it is most cleare. For besides that *Ieremie* doth oft vehemently rebuke them, and cast the shame of this sinne upon them; the three and twentieth Chapter of his Prophecie is a most full exposition of this place: where he crying out against the Prophets, and asking, *how long they would delight in that wicked course of deceiving and hardning the people*; hee calls this kinde of Sermons, dreames, whereby hee meaneth, the conceits of mens owne braines, and the deceits of their evill hearts, by which they did both deceive themselves, and harden the

All inventions of men but vaine and foolish in regard of Gods word. *Lam.* 2. 14. Behold you that thinke too basely of the word of the Lord. *Ierem.* 23. 31.

To seeke out vaine things in stead of Gods word, is to seeke out causes of desolation. *Ier.* m. 5. 31. 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. Reade and judge.

Ierem. 23. 16. Mens devices but dreames, in regard of Gods word.

the people to perdition. He asketh them moreover in that place, whether this was their purpoſe, in that kinde of preaching, *to cauſe his people to forget his name:* that is, to forget his holy word and ſincere worſhip, or at leaſt his judgements and threatnings, by *theſe their dreames, as their forefathers had forgot his name for Baal:* intimating plainly, that this kinde of preaching was the very high way to cauſe the people to forget the word of the Lord, and his pure worſhip; or to bring them to loath and abhorre it, and thereby to draw them to their old Idolatry, or to Atheiſme, or both. Secondly, the Lord in that place cals them theeves, that ſtole away his lively word from the people, and laid that counterfeit in the place of it; and ſo robbed and ſpoiled his people of the true meanes of their ſalvation, and of deliverance from the vengeance. Theſe whom he thus chargeth, were they that had ſweet tongues, the ſugred tongued Preachers, delivering theſe dreames to cauſe the people to erre by their lies and flatteries. He ſaith of them that therefore *they brought no good to the people by all that their preaching:* Yea further he alſo expoſtulates the matter with them thus. *The Prophet* ſaith, *He that hath a dreame, let him tell a dreame:* That is, let him make it knowne, that it is but a dreame, let him tell it as a dreame of his owne, and never come with it in the name of the Lord and ſay, He ſaith, But I ſay. And bids *that he that had his word ſhould ſpeake his word faithfully.* That is, as holy *Paul* expounds it, Not making merchandize of the word of God, as Huckſters doe uſe, that ſet forth their wares ſo, as may be moſt for their commodity and advantage, but as of ſinceritie, as of God, in the ſight of God ſo to ſpeake in Chriſt. All their preaching ſhould have beene as of ſinceritie, as of God, as from the Lords owne mouth; and that not only for the matter, but for the very words, ſo neere as poſſibly they could, as *Paul* ſpeaketh of his faithfulneſſe. The matter of their ſermons ſhould have beene the wiſdome and teſtimonie of God only. *Their words not in the inticing ſpeeches of mans wiſdome: but the words which the Holy Ghoſt taught them, comparing ſpirituall things, with ſpirituall things.* That ſo the plaine evidence of the Spirit and power of the Lord might have appeared in all their preaching. And that the

27. Preaching mens inventions the high-way, to cauſe men to forget Gods word. *verſ.* 30.

31.

32. Thoſe that preach their dreames bring no good to Gods people.

28.

31. Dreams ought to be delivered as dreams, and ſo all mens inventions.

2. *Cor.* 2. 17. Gods word muſt be preached faithfully, and how that is.

1 *Cor.* 2. 1, 2, 4.

the faith and obedience which he would then have wrought thereby in his people, might have beene ſeene cleerely not to have beene wrought by any eloquence or wiſdome of men, but by the power of God, in the ſimplicitie of his owne ordinance. Yea to the end that thoſe weapons of his warfare, whereby he would have his people ſubdued and ſaved, might have beene manifeſted not to have beene carnall or powerfull only through mans devices, but mighty through him alone, through his own ordinance and the working of his bleſſed Spirit accompanying them, and by that divine inſpiration which is in them. Thus ought they ever to have ſpoken as in the ſight and preſence of the Lord, alwaies ready to anſwer unto his heavenly majeſtie, for every ſermon, and for their faithfulneſſe and ſincerine in the handling thereof.

1 *Cor.*2.13.
1 *Cor.*2.5.
2 *Cor.*10.4.
2 *Tim.*3.16.
2 *Cor.*2.17.

But to proceed in the diſcovery of this iniquitie yet further; The Prophet *Ieremie* ſtill purſuing this ſin in that place asketh, *What is the Chaffe to the wheat: Is not my word like a fire*, ſaith the Lord, *and like a hammer that breaketh the hard ſtone*: Signifying thereby that there was no more compariſon betweene their fineſt and wittieſt devices, how glorious ſoever they were in ſhew, and the word of the Lord ſincerely preached, than there is betweene chaffe and wheat. For what could all their wiſdome, learning and eloquence be, unto that hid wiſdome, the word of the everliving and only wiſe God, but as the chaffe to the Wheat? What was it for them but to thruſt out the eternall wiſdome and power of the Lord, and to ſet up the weakneſſe and fooliſhneſſe of men? Is not the word of the Lord the only fire, as the Prophet there demands, that which trieth and fineth the gold and purgeth out the droſſe? That alone which inflameth the hearts of Gods people, with a zeale of his glory, burning out and conſuming whatſoever reſiſteth it. Is it not that hammer, that being weilded aright, bruiſeth the moſt flintie heart in all the world? Is it not that celeſtiall raine that never falleth in vaine, but doth the Lords will for a bleſſing or a curſe? That *Bowe of Ionathan* that never turneth backe emptie? That piercing arrow? That *ſharpe two edged ſword? which entreth thorow to the dividing aſunder of the ſoule and the Spirit*, quickning all the Lords owne choſen people, though

The power of Gods word ſincerely handled.
*Ierem.*23.29.
All devices to Gods word but as chaffe to Wheat.
Ierem. 23.28.
1 *Cor.*1.24.
1 *Cor.*1.20.
*Ierem.*23.29.
The word the Lords fire, His Hammer, Raine.
*Iſa.*55.10.
Bowe, Arrow.
*Heb.*4.12.

it

it wound to the death the hearts of all his enemies? That sweet savour to God in them who are saved and in them that perish?

That loud and shrill sounding trumpet, whereby the wals of *Iericho* fall downe flat? And to knit up this also, is not this that mighty arme of the Lord, whereby he ever pulled all his out of *Sodome* and *Egypt*, and even out of hell it selfe?

2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. *Isai* 53. 1. *Ios.* 6. The arme of the Lord.

Can any one of these things be ever spoken truly of all the wisdome and witty devices of men, though never so profound? of the writings of *Seneca*, or any of the most learned heathens? True it was then, and ever is, that all good Arts and humane learning are a rich blessing of the Lord, specially being rightly used as hand-maids serving this Lady and mistresse, the word of the Lord: I meane helping to the attaining of the right understanding of Gods most sacred word, to the plaine and fruitfull delivery and the right applying thereof; to make it effectuall indeed to turne men from their evill waies unto him that they may be saved. Yea it was then and is ever to be wished, that all Gods faithfull messengers were endued with such excellent parts of all learning as that Euangelicall Propher *Esay* was, and since him, the holy Apostle *Paul*. That they were furnished with all gifts of tongues and all other singular graces, so that it be only to set forth most lively this eternall and mighty word, and to magnifie the God of heaven by the same. But when these humane Arts, these hand-maids and attendants shall come to be set up in the throne; and the Princesse, the word of the Lord to be thrust downe, as being over-meane, nay over-base and impotent; and that not to magnifie Iesus Christ the king of glory, but to advance sinfull dust and ashes, to gaine popular applause, preferment or the like, or closely to bring in Idolatrie againe, or the former profanenesse, this must needs be most abominable to the Lord, and bring with it a most terrible vengeance vpon the practisers of it. Yea, it must necessarily prepare and hasten a people unto most miserable desolation, as it did these, unlesse it be truly repented of and reformed. Thus have we seene their sinne in casting aside the word of the Lord.

Yet other learning set up in place of Gods word, bringeth a terrible plague with it.

Lament. 2. 14.

Iudgement.] Now to come to the judgement which the Lord threatneth

threatneth for this ſinne. Thus he menaceth them for it, That *he will come againſt theſe Prophets* : and repeats it three ſeverall times, in 3. verſes together, in each of them ſetting out theſe Prophets by their ſeverall properties, and prefixing this word *Behold*, to each of them : Becauſe he would have every one to marke it, and to tremble for this ſinne above all other. Firſt in the 30. verſe he ſaith thus: *Therefore behold I will come againſt the Prophets* (ſaith the Lord) *that ſteale away my words every one from his neighbour*. And againe, verſe 31. *Behold, I will come againſt the Prophets* (ſaith the Lord) *which have ſweet tongues, and ſay, He ſaith*. And thirdly in verſe 32. *Behold, I will come againſt them that prophecie falſe dreames, and cauſe my people to erre by their lies and flatteries*, and *I ſent them not nor commanded them, therefore bring they no profit to this people*. Thus doth the Prophet repeat this over and over, and ſo oft bid all to behold it, as if there were almoſt no ſinne in compariſon of this. Or as if theſe were the only men, that he would come againſt; or the only offenders, that he would take vengeance of, or at leaſt that theſe did principally anger him, according as he bids here to begin at the Sanctuary to ſmite. Secondly, this was another part of the vengeance, which was preſently upon theſe Prophets, that hereby they were branded, *That God never ſent them* He would otherwiſe have put his owne word and meſſage into their mouthes, as he hath ever done to thoſe whom he hath ſent. And therefore their conſciences being once awaked, they would looke for nothing, but to have his hand to purſue them, for thruſting in themſelves into the worke, and running before they were ſent. Thirdly, this was another judgement that was preſently upon them alſo; and as another marke of Gods anger on them, whereby all might know that he never ſent them, for that by all their preaching they brought no good to the people. No they ſought not that, but only themſelves; and therefore in ſtead thereof they blinded them, and hardned them much more to perdition, and thus prepared them for the ſlaughter.

So that for any comfort that theſe could have in their function and miniſterie; or in ſtead of being able to ſay, as the true Prophets and meſſengers of the Lord, Behold, *I am here Lord, I and my children whom thou haſt given me* : They might cry out cleane

Jerem. 23. 30, 31, 32.

The Lord will come againſt al ſuch Prophets ſpecially.

They that preach their owne devices, in ſtead of Gods word, ſteale his word from the people.

Verſe 31, 32.

The Lord ſpeakes as if there were no ſinne to this; and as if theſe were the only ſinners of a land.

Such Preachers were never ſent of the Lord.

They that preach their owne devices bring no good to Gods people, but blinde them more.

Iſay 8. 18.

State of such teachers when their consciences shall be awaked. *Lament.* 2. 14.

cleane contrarily with *Adam,* where shall I hide me from the presence of the Lord, for all those soules, which by my vanitie and flatterie I have murdered, and whose bloud crieth for vengeance against me from the earth? Where shall I appeare for destroying the Church of God, and for bringing it and my country, as much as hath lien in me, unto miserable slaverie and utter desolation? Yea the consciences of these men being once thorowly awaked, and they considering the punishment due unto them without unfained repentance, could not but be inforced in the horror thereof, to crie out with *Cain,* My iniquitie is greater than I can beare; even for my continuall seeking out these vaine and foolish devices, and causes of banishment: whereby I have indeed helped to sell the people of God, into the hand of the cursed Babylonian; and to make my deare country a perpetuall prey and spoile unto the bloudy enemie.

Application. Meditate therefore well and apply, judge and repent, and escape the judgement of the Lord.

Abomination 5.

Want of compassion in the Priests and the Prophets, towards the people, and their lacke of care for their salvation; and also their cruelty against the true and faithfull Prophets, and against all the good people and servants of the Lord.

The last and principall duty of the Priests and Prophets, to be full of compassion towards the people. Rejoyce ye to whom God hath given such hearts. *Exod.* 32. 32.

Covenant.] A last part of the duty which God required of the Priests and Prophets towards his people, and that the very chiefest of all, was this: That they of all other should have beene the fullest of compassion, and even as tender fathers, and as nurses towards his people, and chiefly towards all the good people and servants of the Lord: for the Lord had specially appointed them hereunto. And therefore they ought to have preferred the safety and well-fare of the people of the Lord, not only before their owne pompe, wealth, and ease, but even before their owne lives, and whatsoever else was deerest unto them. They ought to have beene of the affection of that worthy

ſervant of God *Moſes*, who would wiſh rather to have beene put out of the Booke of life, than that the Lord ſhould deſtroy his people. Alſo to have had the tender heart of *Ieremie*, to have wiſhed their heads fountaines of teares, to have wept day and night for the eſtate of the people, and the miſeries which were to come upon them. Yea at this time they ſhould have had theſe bowels of compaſſion, which appeared in our Saviour, when he ſtood and wept over Ieruſalem, for their ſins and the evils that he ſaw towards them, though it was forty yeares before. They now ſhould have beene as holy *Paul*, who had continuall heavineſſe in his heart for the peoples wilfull ſtubbornneſſe, and for that they would needs draw downe Gods vengeance upon themſelves. They ought to have beene unto them as the hen ſeeking to gather all the people under their wings to ſuccour and defend them, and to have put themſelves without all feare betweene every ſoule and the danger. Such carefull Paſtors, as whoſe ſtudy ſhould have beene day and night, as *Iacobs* for his flockes, to have fed and preſerved the people of the Lord, and to have brought them to their reſt. Such as none of the people could be offended, but they would *preſently* burne in zeale and affection as *Paul*. Such as *would have ſought out that which was loſt, and have brought againe that which was driven away, have bound up that which was broken, and have ſtrengthned the weake*, as *Ezechiel* ſhewes their duties. Such as would have *looked carefully to the whole flocke over which the Holy Ghoſt had made them overſeers*. And finally ſuch good *ſhepherds as would willingly have given their life for their ſheepe*. Alſo towards all the Lords true Prophets, and all thoſe which were ſuch vigilant Paſtors, they ought to have ſtood affectioned, as toward men ſent ſpecially from the Lord himſelfe, and to have received their meſſage as from his ſacred Oracle. And towards all the good people as towards their owne children and thoſe who were moſt deare and pretious unto the Lord. This was that compaſſion and tenderneſſe which he required of them.

Ieremie.9.1. Faithfull Prophets have *Ieremies* affection towards the people.

Luc.19.41, 42, 43, 44.

Rom.9.2.

Matth.23.37. Gods Miniſters as the hen to the chickens.

As *Iacob* to his flocke.

2 Cor.11.29.

Ezek.34.15, 16.

Acts 20.28.

Iohn 10.11.

Malac.2.7.

Tranſgreſſion.] But the Lord complaines that they for the moſt part, through their former ſinnes, and this judgement upon them, thereby to fill up the meaſure of their iniquities, inſtead of being ſuch Paſtors, became as butchers and wolves unto

Tranſgreſſiõ.

They became Butchers to the flockes and Wolves. *Ezech.* 34. 2, 3. For which the Lord pronounceth a woe. Paſtors without regard of their flocks are Butchers or Wolves to the people. *Iſay* 65. 9, 10, 11.

unto his people, or at leaſt without all care or regard of them, as this our Prophet *Ezechiel* ſheweth, pronouncing a woe againſt them for it, ſaying, *Woe to the ſhepherds of Iſrael, which feed themſelves, ſhould not the ſhepherds feed their flocks? But yee* (ſaith he) *eat the fat, cloath you with the wooll, kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the ſheepe. The weake have ye not ſtrengthned, the ſicke have ye not healed, neither have ye bound up the broken, nor brought againe that which was driven away; neither have ye ſought out that which was loſt, but with crueltie and rigour have ye ruled them, ſo that they were ſcattered and devoured of all the beaſts of the field,* to wit, of all the cruell enemies in the captivitie. Yea moreover the Lord complaines, as we heard before, that they did nothing but lie and ſleepe, and delight in ſleeping, without all ſenſe of their owne eſtate or of their flockes. And that ſo farre forth, as if ſo that they might have their covetous and ambitious minds ſatisfied, and be ſatiate with their pleaſures, they cared not at all though all the ſoules and bodies of Gods deare ones periſhed: for they ſought out thoſe very courſes (as we heard in the former abomination) which muſt needs bring upon them utter deſtruction, both of ſoules and bodies: and whereby they called for all the beaſts of the forreſt to devoure them: they became ſuch fooliſh ſhepherds, or rather ſuch hungry wolves, as thoſe whom *Zachary* ſpeaketh of, who in ſtead of ſeeking the tender Lambs, did cruelly teare them in peeces with their clawes.

Lament. 2. 14.

Zach. 11. 16.

Their dealing with the true Prophets, and why.

And for the true Prophets of the Lord, ſent unto them in the tenderneſſe and riches of his mercy, becauſe they uſed to tell them of thoſe hainous abominations and provocations, and dealt more plainly and painfully with the people than themſelves did, and alſo becauſe they warned all ſorts of the anger of the Lord, and of his plagues and judgements haſtening upon them, and ſo ſought to awake them and to turne them from their evill waies: ſee how they received them. The Lord complaineth, that in ſtead of honouring them as his Angels and meſſengers, ſent to them in mercy, and in ſtead of hearkning unto them, they dealt moſt deſpightfully and cruelly with them. Even as our Saviour ſpeakes of their ſucceſſours, the Scribes and Phariſies in his time, ſaying, *Behold I ſend you Prophets and*

Mal. 2. 7.

They were as the Scribes and Phariſies, filling up their meaſure.

wiſe

wiſe men and Scribes, and of them ye ſhall kill & crucifie, and of them ye ſhall ſcourge in your Synagogues, and perſecute from citie to citie. Matth. 23. 34.

And this they did, that thus they might fill up the meaſure of the ſins of theſe their fore-fathers. Reade the Prophet *Ieremie*, who lived and prophecied from the thirteenth yeare of the reigne of holy *Ioſiah*, unto this very time, and in him we ſhall ſee how the Lord hath principally noted them, that they even the chiefe of them, did by all meanes ſeeke the diſgrace of *Ieremie*, and other the true Prophets of the Lord, even in thoſe daies, and were the chiefe cauſe of all their troubles, though they were not able to denie their doctrine, nor to reſiſt the ſpirit whereby they ſpake. So that they either did the violence to them themſelves, as *Paſhur* who ſmit *Ieremie* and put him in priſon, or elſe they incenſed the rulers and after a ſort inforced them hereunto. So as ſometimes when both the rulers and people have beene for the Prophets, yet they have had much adoe, to deliver them out of the hands of the Prieſts. As in the caſe of *Ieremie* himſelfe, in the very beginning of the reigne of *Iehoiakim* the ſonne of *Ioſiah*; when *Ieremie* had told them from the Lord, by a ſpeciall commandement in a great aſſembly in the Temple; *That if they would not repent of their ſinnes, and heare the words of his ſervants (whom he in mercy ſent unto them) to walke in all his waies which he had ſet before them, he would make the Temple, as he had made Shilo before*, to wit, *a deſolation: and he would make that citie, a curſe to all the nations of the earth, as he had threatned in his Law.* The Prieſts and the Prophets hearing that, in ſtead of humbling themſelves, and of ſeeking to draw the people to repentance, ſpake moſt maliciouſly to the Princes, and to all the people, ſaying, *This man is worthy to die, for he hath prophecied againſt this citie, as ye have heard with your eares.* Alſo a little before this, they ſaid, *He ſhould die the death for it.* *Ieremie* he makes his apologie to the Princes, and to all the people, in the preſence of them all, to this effect: That the Lord *had ſent him to ſpeake all that he did, and that if yet they would repent, the Lord would repent him of the plague that he had pronounced againſt them.* As for himſelfe, *that he was in their hands, to doe with him what they thought good; but he bids them all to know for a certainty, that*

The chiefe cauſe of all *Ieremies* troubles.

Ier. 20. 1, 2.

Inſtance of their proceedings againſt *Ieremie.*

Ier. 26. 1, *to* 6.

verſ. 11.
verſ. 8.

Ieremies Apologie.

verſ. 12.

13.
14.

15.
16. *Ieremie* delivered by a worthy ſpeech of ſome of the rulers, and by urging *Hezech.* dealing with *Micha.*
17.
18. *Micha.* 3.12. Let all holy rulers ſet the bleſſed enſample of worthy *Ezech.* before their faces, and follow it, and they ſhal finde the like happy effect. *Ier.* 26. 20, *to* 24.

that if they did put him to death, they ſhould undoubtedly bring innocent bloud upon themſelves, and upon that citie; for of a truth the Lord had ſent him to them, to ſpeake all thoſe words in their eares. This was the defence of the Prophet. Now after this once heard, the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *that the Princes and all the people, ſaid unto the Prieſts and Prophets, This man is not worthy to die, for he hath ſpoken unto us in the name of the Lord our God.* Whereupon after a worthy ſpeech made by ſome of the rulers of the people, ſetting before them the memorable behaviour of good King *Hezechia*, and all Iudah at the like threatnings of the Prophet *Micha* againſt them, and againſt that citie, that they in ſtead of putting him to death, or doing him any hurt, did feare before the Lord and pray, and the Lord repented him of the plague which he had pronounced: And that therefore by ſuch a proceeding as they would have had againſt *Ieremy*, they might bring great evils unto their ſoules: By that worthy ſpeech, and chiefly by the meanes of a good noble man, *Ahikam* the ſonne of *Shaphan*, *Ieremie* was delivered, that he was not put to death.

This was ordinarie to uſe all devices to ſtir up the rulers againſt the true Prophets. *Amos* 7 10. This principally by falſe Prophets, as *Shemajah.*

Though about the ſame time the like violence prevailed againſt another of the Prophets, one *Uriah*, who did in all things juſtifie *Ieremies* prophecy. So that he was firſt driven to flie into Egypt, and afterward being fetcht from thence, was put to death: whereby it evidently appeares, that the Prieſts did by all meanes force the Magiſtrates to theſe proceedings. To this end they therefore uſed all devices to incenſe the rulers, and to drive out the poore Prophets. Like as *Amaziah* the high Prieſt of Bethel, ſtirred up the laſt king *Ieroboam*, hard before the former captivitie of Iſrael, againſt poore *Amos*, complaining that *Amos had conſpired againſt the King, in the middeſt of the houſe of Iſrael, and that the Land was not able to beare his words.* And all was, becauſe he had threatned ſuch a vengeance, as this which *Ieremie* denounced, and as it preſently after came to paſſe. Sathan alſo ſeeing the malice and rage of the Prieſts againſt the true Prophets, he raiſeth up likewiſe falſe Prophets, men it ſeemeth, of ſome excellent gifts like unto the true Prophets, to provoke both Prieſts, Princes and people, againſt the true Prophets, and to make them odious in the eies of all the people;

terming

terming them *Ravers*, and by other names of contempt: and withall, urging and exaſperating the Prieſts, by their authoritie to impriſon them, as the Lord hath ſet downe the practiſe of *Shemaia* the Nehelamite, againſt *Ieremie*, *Ierem.* 29. 24.

Ierem. 29. 24, 25, 26.

By all which as was ſaid, it appeares plainly, that as it was in the time of our Saviour, before their laſt utter deſtruction, for their malice againſt our Saviour, and all his true Diſciples; ſo it was at this time, except only that in the time of our Saviour they had more light, and ſo more filled up the meaſure of their iniquitie. Thus by degrees from a hatred of the threatnings and warnings of the Prophets, they did grow to a hatred of their perſons, and oppugning of their doctrine, and maligning of all true practiſe of godlineſſe. For the people alſo, the wicked Prieſts and falſe Prophets, having brought them firſt to be void of all feare and ſenſe of Gods judgements, by ſcorning at all the admonitions and threatnings of the true Prophets; they then carried them forward to all irreligiouſneſſe and profaneneſſe, as it could not be otherwiſe. And in the end to a deadly malice againſt all the godly, who ſo lived, as thoſe Prophets taught them out of the word of the Lord; and even of all who feared the judgements to come; and contrarily to a liking and love of all the wicked; for theſe two muſt needs ever goe together, as the Prophet *Hoſea* couples them, and ſhewes them to have beene in their Prieſts and Prophets before the former captivitie of Iſrael: *The watchman of Ephraim*, ſaith he, *ſhould be with his God; but the Prophet is the ſnare of a fowler, in all his wayes, and hatred in the houſe of his God*: ſignifying thus much; That when the watch-man, that ſhould be with the Lord and only for him, is become the ſnare of a fowler, in all his wayes, that is, is all for his prey, for his purpoſe and advantage, he is then hatred in the houſe of his God. He muſt then of neceſſitie ſhew and worke all poſſible hatred againſt all the true ſervants of the Lord, which condemne and abhorre all his evill wayes, or which hinder his commoditie, or diſcover his iniquitie, like as *Amaziah* did *Amos* at that time. He muſt then needs uſe all his wits and policie, to bring all ſuch as are faithfull indeed and truly ſincere into diſcredit, and ſo worke inward diviſions and hatred, ſo long as by diviſions he can better hide and obtaine his purpoſes, and

Eſay 5. 20. 8. 18. *Micha* 3. 2.

Hoſe. 9. 8.

How they riſe by degrees to this height of impietie.

As in the time of our Saviour, ſo now. *Matth.* 23. 32.

When the watch-man is the ſnare of a fowler, he is then hatred in the houſe of his God.

See *Iunius*. How he works this hatred.

and hold on his evill courses, without controlment, as these Priests, and Prophets did against *Ieremie* and the rest. Now this must necessarily be the high-way to Atheisme, to cause men to regard no God nor religion, and so to wallow in all other abominations to anger the Lord, as it came to passe amongst this people, and was increased untill this vengeance came. Thus have we seene the horrible transgression of the Priests in this behalfe.

This the high-way to Atheisme and all profaneness.

Vengeance.] Now for a just recompence, first of their senslesnesse and lacke of compassion of their people, as we heard before, how the Lord cals all the beasts of the forrest to devoure his flocke, so he *threatneth to come against these shepherds*, that is, to come in vengeance as he did, and to *require his sheepe at their hands*; to *require the blood of his sheepe*: and that *he would cause them to cease from feeding his flocke, or from feeding themselves*, and that *they should devoure his sheepe no longer*. Even as he threatneth those Idoll shepherds by the Prophet *Zacharie*, those especially who were in the time of our Saviour, and before the last utter desolation of the Iewes, who did no dutie of shepherds more than idols, but devoured the flocke and tare the poore sheepe with their clawes, like unto these in all things; being therefore raised up in Gods anger, to prepare all that people to the finall execution of his vengeance, as these were now; saying to them thus: *Oh idoll shepherd that leaveth the flocke, that the sword shall be upon his arme, and upon his right eye, his arme shall be cleane dried up, and his right eye shall be darkned.* Wherein the Prophet intimated thus much: That when the sword of the Lords vengeance should come upon them, they should then lose all their power, whereby they had so long tyrannized over his people, and all their glorie should be cleane gone, they should have nothing but a palpable darknesse and miserie perpetually. Secondly, for their misusing the true Prophets of the Lord sent to them in mercie, and their crueltie against them; like as *Amos* told *Amaziah* the Priest of *Bethel* to his face, what should become of him, and what a vengeance should come on him for it; so likewise doth *Ieremie*: for even as when *Amaziah* had complained of the poore Prophet *Amos* to the King, scoffed at him, driven him away from the court and charged him that he

Vengeance.

Isay 56. 9.
The just recompence of all careless Pastors.
Ezech. 34. 10.

Zach. 11. 16.

The wofull condition of all Idoll shepherds.

The Lords terrible denuntiation against the Priests for his servants.
Amos 7. 16.
As against *Amazia* for *Amos*.
Amos 7. 10, 11, 12, 13.

should

ſhould not propheſie againſt Iſrael, nor ſpeake any thing againſt the houſe of *Iskah* any more: *Amos* then told him, that therefore the Lord ſaid unto him, *That his wife ſhould be made an harlot in the citie, his ſonnes and his daughters ſhould fall by the ſword, and his lands ſhould be divided by line*, meaning by ſtrangers, and which was yet the heavieſt of all, *he himſelfe ſhould die in a polluted land*, that is, as a captive under the heathen. Even as he had contemned the Lord, ſo deſpitefully abuſing his ſervants, which were moſt deare unto him, being his ſpouſe and his owne children, accuſing, vexing and driving them out, ſo the Lord would plague him in his wife and in his children, which were the deareſt unto him of all other things; and cauſe his eyes to behold it, and would drive him out of his land, yea and make him to die in a polluted land. And finally, Iſrael his people, whom he and the reſt had ſo deceived, and whom they would not ſuffer to be warned from the Lord, ſhould goe into Captivitie forth of their land. So *Ieremie* in like manner tels *Paſhur* the Prieſt, who had ſmitten him and put him in the ſtocks, *That the Lord had not called his name Paſhur, but Magor-Miſſabib, or feare round about; for that the Lord would make him a terrour to himſelfe and to all his friends; That they ſhould all fall by the ſword of the enemie*, meaning in the Captivitie, and his eyes ſhould ſee it, ſeeing that now he would not beleeve it. And as he had made a ſlave of the Prophet of the Lord, ſo the Lord would make him a ſlave and a captive, and all his friends to whom he had propheſied lies.

Amos 7. 16, 17.

By *Ieremie* to *Paſhur*. *Ier.* 20. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Thus by all theſe ſinnes of the Prieſts and Prophets it appeareth moſt clearely, why the vengeance of God muſt needs begin at the Sanctuarie, becauſe it could not be otherwiſe, but that wickedneſſe muſt of neceſſitie flow from thence into all the whole land, as *Ieremie* ſpeaketh, and that both from the doctrine and examples of thoſe Prieſts and Prophets. Seeing they were now become ſuch as we have ſeene, there muſt needs be for moſt part like Prieſt, like people, and they many of them, as thoſe in Iſrael who murdered by conſent. And this eſpecially for the injuries and diſgraces done by them to the faithfull Prophets of the Lord, who diſcovered theſe and all other their abominations, and foretold the plagues readie to come upon them.

Concluſion ſhewing why the vengeance muſt needs begin at the Sanctuarie. *Hoſ.* 5. 1, 2, &c.

And finally, for their ruling with such crueltie over the poore people of the Lord. It could not be therefore but that they should be unto him as Sodome, and that the cry of their sinnes should goe up to heaven, God could no longer forbeare. And thus much for the horrible sinnes of the Priests and Prophets, which were committed commonly and publikely before the Captivitie to anger the Lord, as to provoke him to bring this Captivitie, and thus to begin the vengeance at the Sanctuarie.

*Ezech.*8.6,7,8. Some particular abominations reserved to the end.

There are other most odious and loathsome abominations mentioned in this vision, committed by the Priests, and also by many of the Rulers secretly in the Temple, immediately before the destruction, and even then when the charge was given for the execution, as being the filling up the measure of all their abominations. But because they were secret, and the last fore-runners, and also committed by them with others, to shew how desperately they were given up in the end, and whither sinne, not repented of in due time, doth bring men, I will reserve them to the last place, to the immediate tokens of vengeance.

Application.

Application.] To omit the bloud of so many of the faithfull Martyrs of Iesus, so cruelly shed, by the hands of those idolatrous Priests, whereof we cannot say that our land is yet purged by unfained repentance, seeing there hath beene ever since such a longing, with plotting and striving, in so many, for the same againe; and also, how it still hath beene more polluted with the bloud of soules, by so many of those, who have beene such Idoll shepherds as *Zacharie* and *Ezechiel* cry out of; such as either have had no abilitie to feed, or else no care and conscience to doe it aright; or who have fed their flocks with vanitie and flatterie, whereby Gods people have perished for lack of knowledge and warning. And to passe over likewise in silence that crueltie which hath beene in the hearts and in the bloudie desires of all who are set for Poperie, as the Powder-treason proclaimes to all the world; and so also the secret malice of all other set for Atheisme, and prophanenesse, and other sins: The more serious application hereof I leave to every mans conscience, and namely to them who find themselves most guilty; and chiefly to those whom the reformation hereof doth principally concerne, to see the land purged hereof, to the end that we may escape the

*Isa.*56.9,10.

*Zach.*12.16,17. *Ezech.*34.4.

vengeance.

vengeance. The Lord having ordained the diſcoverie even of this iniquitie, yea ſpecially, as being a principall meanes to turne away the Captivitie, and to hide this ſinne from his eyes, by ſetting it before our owne, and ſo by our heartie ſorrow and unfained repentance, with moſt loud cries in the eares of the Lord for pardon of it, to pacifie his Majeſtie.

Lament.2.14.

Ierem.23.22.

Abomination 6.

Of the ſinnes of the people in generall concerning the Prophets, and firſt in approving the wicked Prieſts and falſe Prophets and their evill wayes.

THus much for the chiefe ſinnes of the wicked Prieſts and falſe Prophets. Now we are to come to the people unto whom this iniquitie of the Prieſts did flow, and the manner how it did in Gods juſt judgement ſtreame out unto them. The way and meanes was this: Firſt, by approving and liking of thoſe wicked Prieſts and falſe Prophets, and their evill waies, and thereby growing by little and little to diſlike all the faithfull ſervants of God, who taught and did otherwiſe than thoſe Prophets did. Firſt therefore, for their approbation of the wicked Prieſts and falſe Prophets.

How the iniquitie of the Prieſts and Prophets flowed to all the people.

Covenant] Whereas herein the Lord had done theſe things for them: 1. He had carefully provided for his people, that they might not be deceived by falſe Prophets, which ſhould ever riſe up amongſt them; and to that purpoſe had given unto them *his law and teſtimonie*, to wit, his heavenly word whereby to try the ſpirits, to diſcerne betweene the true Prophets and the falſe, betweene the true ſhepherd and the theefe and hireling, to the end that they might follow the one, who ſought only Gods glorie, and the ſaving of the people, and eſcape the other, who ſought only themſelves, though with the perdition of the people; and ſo to be guided by them who ſate in *Moſes* chaire, only ſo farre as they taught *Moſes* doctrine. 2. And ſecondly, whereas he had done this, *viz.* he had fore-warned them that falſe Prophets ſhould ariſe, by whom he would *trie them, whether they*

Covenant. The meanes which the Lord had provided that his people ſhould not be deceived by falſe Prophets.
Iſa.8.20.
1. Law and Teſtimonie.
Deut.13.1,2,3.
Deut.13.3,4.
2. Forewarning them of falſe Prophets.

they loved him with all their heart and with all their ſoule, and whether they would continue to walke with him, or to depart from him. 3. Thirdly, he had bidden them to *goe to the Law and to the Teſtimonie*, to trie them thereby, and had told them that *if they ſpake not according thereunto*, there was no light in them. 4. Fourthly, he had given them holy Lawes and Magiſtrates, that what evils they could not helpe by loving admonition and exhortation, they might redreſſe by the benefit thereof. 5. And what they could not remedie by any other way, yet every one was to mourne for and to ſhew their diſlike of, within the compaſſe of their calling. 6. And finally, whereas they were to have approved only of that which God approved of, and to have diſliked and by all means diſallowed of that which his Majeſtie diſallowed, as his owne children, remembring that he that juſtifieth the wicked and he that condemneth the righteous are both alike abomination unto him: and thus ever to have cleaved faſt unto the word of the Lord, as their only guide and direction.

Iſay 8. 20.
3. Injoyned them to trie theſe by the Law and Teſtimonie.
4. Magiſtrates and Lawes to redreſſe the evils.
5. To mourne for what they could not remedie.
Iſay 5.20,23.
Prov. 17.15.
6. To approve and diſallow only with God.
Deut. 13.4.

Tranſgreſſion.] They cleane contrary (being given up in Gods juſt judgement, becauſe they made no more reckoning of his heavenly word and covenant to walke therein, nor had any better regard of the faithfull Prophets ſent to them in mercie) fell to a generall approbation and applauſe, of thoſe unconſcionable and wicked Prieſts and falſe Prophets, and of their wayes againſt the cleare evidences of Gods word, and the moſt manifeſt light of their owne conſciences. So long as they did not trouble them, with telling them of their ſinnes, and would play the goodfellowes with them; and eſpecially ſo long as they would preach pleaſing things: Peace, peace, and all is well, and heale all with ſweet words, applying themſelves to their humours, according to the times, or ſeeke out ſome fine and wittie conceits, theſe were the only men, even Prophets alone for them. Thus complaines the Lord by the Prophet *Micha*, *If a man walking in the ſpirit and falſhood, doe lie, ſaying, I will propheſie unto thee of wine and of ſtrong drinke, he ſhall even be the Prophet of this people.* The meaning of the Prophet ſeemeth plainly to be thus much in effect, If any man taking upon himſelfe to be a ſpirituall man, and a Prophet of the Lord, and will frame himſelfe in all things to pleaſe, fitting himſelfe to the time,

Tranſgreſſio.
Iſay 6 9,10.
2 *Theſſ* 2.10,11, 12.
They fell to approve of the wickedeſt, and the reaſon.
Ier. 6. 13. & 8. 10, 11. & 14. 13, 14. & 23. 14, 17.
Becauſe theſe troubled them not, but ſought in all things to pleaſe them.
Mich. 2. 11.
Theſe the Prophets alone.

time, If he will cry, Peace, peace, and all is well, though he ſpeake as the old ſerpent that ſaid, you ſhall not die at all, and if he be ſuch a one as will play the good fellow, leade or accompanie the people to the beſt wine and ſtrongeſt drinke, with all other exceſſe; and be readie if need be, to pay for all, this is a Prophet alone, this is the man whom all doe magnifie. The Prophet *Ieremie* yet ſets out this abomination more lively, bringing in the Lord complaining of it, in this grievous manner: *Shall I not viſit for theſe things, or ſhall not my ſoule be avenged of ſuch a nation as this?* And why? for ſaith he, *A horrible ſinne and a filthy thing is committed in the land, the Prophets propheſie lies, and the Prieſts receive gifts in their hands.* Or as our new tranſlation hath it, more expreſſing the meaning of the Holy Ghoſt, *A wonderfull and a horrible thing is committed in the land, The Prophets propheſie falſly, and the Prieſts beare rule by their meanes:* That is, according to ſome of the beſt interpreters; All the courſes of the Prieſts are for their owne benefit, pompe and preferment, and that they may beare rule over my people at their pleaſure. And this they doe by the helpe of the falſe Prophets, whom they ſuborne and ſet up, to get themſelves authoritie. Then followeth after, that which is the worſt of all: *And my people,* ſaith God, *love to have it ſo.* As if he ſhould ſay, my people who ſhould mourne to ſee me ſo diſhonoured, in ſtead of mourning, delight therein, they delight only in ſuch Prieſts and Prophets, and in ſuch like horrible and monſtrous wickedneſſe, whereby I am ſo diſhonoured and provoked. Therefore ſaith the Lord, what will ye doe in the end thereof? That is, what will ye grow to both Prieſts and people; if I let you goe on ſtill, and doe not prevent and ſtay this wickedneſſe of yours by my judgement, as I have determined? Thus have we ſeene the firſt ſinne of the people, in approving the wickedneſſe of theſe their leaders, and how from thence iniquitie flowed, as with a full ſtreame to all the reſt.

Ieremie. 5. 29. God cannot but be avenged for this ſinne.

1 Pet. 5. 3.

Ieremie. 5. 29.

Rom. 1. 31.

Vengeance.] Now to come to the vengeance for this ſinne. The vengeance is in the ſin it ſelfe; that they ſhould be thus far given over to *delight* in theſe. Which howſoever to a carnall man it may ſeeme a matter of nothing, becauſe it is ſo uſuall with God in his juſtice, to fit men with Preachers according to their

Vengeance.

Ieremie. 5. 29.

The severitie of the Lords most righteous judgement in fitting a sinfull people with Preachers to their hearts. *Isay* 6.9.

their carnall liking; and that they shall highly esteeme of such, yet it is amongst the heavieſt of his judgements upon a people, for this prepares the way to all his plagues to be powred downe upon such a nation. This was the way unto the accomplishment of that spirituall judgement, which he threatned to bring upon them: *That by hearing, they should heare and not understand; and seeing they should see and not perceive untill the vengeance came.* Those being blinde made the people blinde, that they could not discerne of many fearefull sinnes, to be any sinnes at all, nor yet see the judgement rushing in upon them, no not at noone dayes, in the most cleere light shining unto them in the ministerie of the faithfull Prophets.

Isay 29.9.
Mich. 3.6.

Hos. 9.9.
Ezech. 14.10.

And thus there became *like people like Priest*, and *like Priest like people*; as the Lord hath threatned by *Hosea* before Israels captivitie. First, like in sinne, after in plagues. So that they came to that height, that *Hosea* speakes thus of them after: *The Prophet is a foole*, that is, given to seeke out vaine and foolish things by all meanes to please the people. *The spirituall man is mad*; that is, mad-drunke with the world and the desire of it; for the multitude of their iniquities; to wit, as a just recompence of the iniquities of that age, which would not endure the true and faithfull messengers of God; so to fit them according to their hearts, and thus to plague their former sinnes. The Lord hath beene wont to deale thus in punishing sinne, so to give up men unto their owne hearts lusts, to satiate them in their owne wayes, when they reject his wayes and ordinances; as he gave them quailes in their lust, untill they came forth at their very nostrils.

Hos. 9.7,8.
Lament. 2.14.
The Prophet is a foole for the multitude of iniquities, and the spirituall man mad.

Psal. 81.11,12.

The Lord hath beene wont thus to plague a sinfull people. Threatned it as a perpetuall punishment for despising his word and following our owne hearts. *Ezech.* 14.1,2,3, &c. to 12.

Yea he hath also threatned this vengeance as a just punishment, to follow ever upon the contempt of his word, and the seeking after our owne hearts. And thus hath he alwayes plagued his people, both under the Law and under the Gospell. Amongst others, there are two most fearefull places of Scripture, which it were a happie thing for all Gods people to be acquainted with, and oftentimes to meditate of them. They would keepe many a foule from falling, and the best of us from being offended with such fals. One of them is in *Ezechiel* 14. written about this time, to warne this people, and to declare the wrath

that

that was already upon them. Where the Holy Ghoſt ſaith that when certaine of the Elders of Iſrael came and ſate before the Prophet *Ezekiel* (as their manner was to doe even untill the time that they were growne deſperately wicked, and were come to the very worſt, though they came but to ſcoffe or to carpe, or at leaſt in taking delight in the ſpeech and gifts of the Prophet, or to heare ſome new matter, as may appeare *Ezech.* 33.30,31.) *Verſ.* 2,3. the word of the Lord came unto the Prophet at that very inſtant. And the Lord told him of thoſe men, which came as it were to ſeeke the Lords will at his mouth, That *they had ſet up their Idols in their hearts, and the ſtumbling blocke of their iniquitie before their faces.* That is, they came in a deſire and reſolution to turne unto Idolatrie, or to walke in it, and to walke in other their wicked waies. Then he asketh the Prophet whether it was fit he ſhould anſwer them, meaning whether it was fit to doe it by his true and faithfull Prophets. After he bids the Prophet to give them this generall warning; That *for every man who had ſet up his Idoll in his heart,* (that is, any wickedneſſe, as his Idoll to ſerve it, and ſo did preferre it before the Lord, who ſhould dwell in his heart, and whom he ſhould ſerve) *and yet came unto the Prophet,* as if *to inquire of the Lord what he ſhould doe, the Lord would anſwer every ſuch man according to the multitude of his Idols,* that is, according to the abominations that were in his ſoule, ſo to catch him in the nets and devices of his owne wicked heart. And after threatneth to *ſet his face againſt ſuch a man, to make him an example and proverbe,* to wit, for diſſembling ſo with him, and making an Idoll of his Majeſtie. He denounceth alſo to *cut off ſuch a one from the midſt of his people,* that they might know that he was the Lord, when he executed ſuch righteous judgements upon ſuch impudent diſſemblers. And when it might be demanded how the Prophets could ſo deceive them, or be ſo deceived; the Lord anſwereth thus, *If the Prophet be deceived when he hath ſpoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that Prophet.* Not that he had or would worke any evill in him, for that is contrary to his nature, but that he had left ſuch a one to himſelfe, that is, to his owne bad heart and to Satan, thereby preparing himſelfe to judgement and to deſtruction, contrary to his vaine hope:

Ezek. 14.7,8. How God will anſwer hypocrits comming to inquire of him.

Verſ. 4.

Verſ. 5.

Verſ. 8.

State of diſſembling hypocrits making ſhewes of hearing Gods word.

Verſ. 9.

Like

Like as he left *Balaam* for his covetousnesse to goe to curse Gods people; so he would give over such Prophets to themselves, to frame themselves to speake so as to please all that sought unto them in all their evill waies, and according to that which they would have. And after it followeth, That *he would then stretch out his hand upon that Prophet also, to destroy him likewise from the midst of his people.* That *they should beare their punishment together. The punishment of the false Prophet who deceived him, should be as the punishment of him that sought to such a false Prophet in such manner.* The Lord likewise there threatneth, that this plague should be generall, *to all the wicked, to take all the house of Israel in the nets of their owne hearts, because they were all departed from him, through these their Idols. To the end that after he had rewarded them all, and made them in the Captivitie to see their sinne, and how they had departed from him, they might no more goe astray from him, nor be polluted with all their transgressions, but that they might be his people, and he might be their God.*

Deceivers and deceived punished alike. *Vers.* 10.

Vers. 5. The desperate case of backesliders.

Vers. 11.

The second place is principally for the contempt of the Gospell in the daies of Antichrist, these wherein we live, 2. *Thess.* 2. 10, 11. where *the Lord* having very lively and visibly set out Antichrist, so as all in these daies, who will not wilfully put out their owne eies, must needs know him; and also having shewed the manner of his working, that it shall be *with all deceiveablenesse of unrighteousnesse*, he after points out those upon whom his power and doctrine shall prevaile, namely upon *them that perish*, impenitent sinners. After he declares the cause why, *because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.* They received the truth, but not in love of it, but for other carnall respects; not in a sound love of the truth and of Iesus Christ that they might be saved. And then he shews the righteous judgment of the Lord upon all such: That therefore *he would send them strong delusions*, no sleight or weake deceits, but mighty delusiõs, *that they should beleeve lies*, even such palpable lies, as that all might grope, by suffering false teachers to seduce them. After he repeats the end againe more fully, *That all they might be damned which beleeved not the truth.* And finally the just recompence for not receiving the truth to obey it, but taking pleasure in their unrighteousnes and in their sins wherein they formerly lived.

2. *Thess.* 2. 10, 11. Antichrists delusions follow the contempt of the Gospell.

Vers. 10.

Vers. 11.

Vers. 12.

Now

Now how doth God ſend theſe ſtrong deluſions on men ordinarily, but by their teachers, who are themſelves deluded by Satan firſt, and ſo fitted for them? Theſe the Lord ſends, to fit ſuch a people with ſuch teachers and ſuch doctrine as they may delight in, for that they would take no pleaſure in his word nor in his true ſervants. Becauſe men will not ſuffer the wholeſome doctrine of Chriſt, to walke in it, but will walke after their owne luſts, and have their eares itching after novelties, God in his wrath raiſeth up ſuch teachers for them, to ſpeake to them according to their hearts deſire, and by covetouſneſſe to make merchandize of their ſoules with fained words, ſo to ſel them to Satan. And that ſuch ſhould privily bring in damnable hereſies, denying the Lord who hath bought them, that is, denying all power of his religion and true godlineſſe, only retaining a ſhew thereof. Such as *Iannes* and *Iambres*, who ſet themſelves to reſiſt *Moſes*, and to turne others away from ſubmitting themſelves unto the Lord.

Why God ſends falſe teachers and ſeducers. 2. *Tim.* 4. 3

2. *Pet.* 2. 1, 2, 3.

2. *Tim.* 3. 8.

Thus we ſee how the Lord in his juſtice ſends unto a people a multitude of ſuch deluding Prophets, and withall gives them up to delight only in ſuch, to lull them faſt aſleepe, and to make them drunke with ſome fearefull ſins, even thoſe which it may be they have hated in former time, and whereof very children could ſee the loathſomneſſe. This is a ſpeciall part of the beginning of that vengeance denounced from the Lord, *That the Sun ſhould goe downe over the Prophets at noone dayes, and that then they ſhould groape as in darknes.* That in the glorious light of the truth ſhining bright to others at the very ſame inſtant, yet ſuch a palpable darkneſſe ſhould come both upon ſuch Prophets and upon all the people delighting in them, that they ſhould not be able to ſee their moſt abominable ſinnes, nor the vengeance of God already upon them, or violently ruſhing on them, even then when it might be felt, when blinde men might grope it. This ſeemeth to be the plaine meaning of the Holy Ghoſt in that place, by the oppoſition following in the 8. verſe, where the Prophet ſpeakes thus of himſelfe, That yet notwithſtanding, he was full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgement and ſtrength to declare unto *Iacob* his tranſgreſſion, and to *Iſrael* his ſinne: contrary to that blindneſſe wherein the

Micha. 3. 5, 6.

the false Prophets stood. And so the full accomplishment of that vengeance to be, when their miseries came. So that we may see cleerely that this judgement ever followeth the contempt of Gods word as a righteous reward, and commeth upon all those who never receive the love of the word unfainedly so as to rejoyce in it, to obey it, and to glorifie God and be thankfull for it: but which in stead thereof take pleasure in some one sinne or other, wherein they either lived secretly before, or whereof at least their hearts were never truly and thorowly reformed.

2. Thess. 2. 10, 12.

How God punished the very abusing of the light of nature in the Gentiles.

And to conclude this point: Thus hath our most holy and just God beene wont to make a way to his wrath even amongst the very Gentiles, those who never had either light of Gospel or Law, but the very bare law of nature, to the end that they might so fill up the measure of their sinne, for abusing that light which he gave unto them. First, he gave them up to become fooles in those things wherein they professed themselves most wise. Secondly, hee hath left them up to their owne hearts lust. Thirdly, to vile affections. Fourthly, to a reprobate sense, a minde destitute of all truth and goodnesse which they had before, not onely to wallow in filthy sinnes, which they knew aforetime to be worthy of death, but also (which is the highest degree of all) to favour them that doe them. And all for this, because when they knew God by that light of nature which they had, and by his workes, they did not glorifie him as God, by walking according to that light, neither were thankfull for it. And therfore if he did thus most justly punish the Gentiles, in giving them thus up to approve of the wickedest, how much more might he thus plague this people, to whom besides the light of nature, he had given the light of his heavenly word, of his wonderfull works both mercies and judgements, with fatherly corrections, and whatsoever might be to teach them to discerne betweene good and evill, to love the good, to hate the bad, to turne them from their evill way that hee might spare them.

Rom. 1. 22.
Vers. 24.
Vers. 26.
Vers. 28.

Whether the Prophets purposed to deceive, or the people to be deceived.

But here a question may be demanded not unfit to this purpose: Whether those who were thus deceived by the false Prophets, came not unto the Prophets with a desire to know the truth: or whether they by whom they were thus deluded, had any

any purpose to seduce them, or did thinke that they spake any thing but the truth unto them.

I answer, that although neither the one came purposely to be deceived, nor the other had any purpose to deceive; yet, first, those that came to aske counsell of the Lord by those Prophets, came thus, as *having their stumbling blocks set up in their hearts*; that is, having a desire and resolution to walke on still in their owne hearts lusts and evill wayes; and wishing that the word might be agreeable to their desire, and that it might not in any thing crosse them, as *Ahab* sending for the Prophets to advise with. And therefore, in the second place, they no doubt, as neere as they could, sought out such Prophets, as being of some note, might yet speake according to their hearts, as *Balak* sought out *Balaam:* and *Ahab* sends for his Prophets, or at least such as should not offend them.

Ezek. 14. 3, 4.

2. King. 22. 6, 8, 13, 18.

Also for the Prophets themselves, it is most like they were ordinarily such as these, who had set up their stumbling blocks in their hearts, as *Balaam* and *Ahabs* Prophets, and therefore in their preaching did not seeke onely the glory of God and the saving of his people, by turning them from their evill way, or to approve themselves to God chiefly: but how to please and to approve themselves to men, to make all their preaching a step and meanes to their preferment or commoditie, and alwaies to serve their purposes, according as their hearts were. And therefore the Lord in his justice either gave them up wholly to Satan, to be deluded themselves, and preach lies unto the people; or preaching truths, yet to misapply them, or to deale so some way, as to make sure that they might never touch their sinne, or displease them. Or if they did at any time so touch them, as they must needs handling many parts of Gods word, yet ever to have some sweet words and fine devices to heale up all againe. And so never to doe them any good, to convert them to the Lord, but to strengthen them still in their iniquitie. The Lord hath caused (amongst others) these two fearefull presidents which I touched before, to be carefully registred in his word, and to be set out at large, of the manner of his righteous proceeding herein, both in regard of people and Prophets.

How the Prophets themselves were deceived.

Ezek. 14. 3, 4.

Esay 56. 11.

Ier. 6. 14.

Two fearefull presidents hereof set out more at large.

As first, that in *Balak* the King of Moab, when he will have

The first of the

Gods

King of Moab and *Balaam*. *Num.* 22. 6,7,8.

Gods people curſed, he ſeekes for *Balaam* a Prophet fit for his purpoſe, one it ſeemes that uſed to propheey only for a reward. For the Holy Ghoſt ſaith they carried the reward of the ſooth-ſaying in their hands, and *Balaam* he muſt ſay as the king would have him, and then will the King give him a rich reward. Yet he muſt curſe them in the name of the Lord. *Balaam* is ready to take the occaſion, to gratifie the king of *Moab*; and he conſults with the mouth of the Lord in that matter, about the going with them and curſing of that people. The Lord gives him a reſolute anſwer at the firſt time that he asketh, (notwithſtanding his bad heart) that he ſhould not goe to curſe them; becauſe that people was bleſſed. And hereupon he anſwers the meſſengers of the king of *Moab*, That the Lord had refuſed to give him leave to go with them; ſignifying thereby, that he was ready and deſireous to do it, if the Lord would give him leave. Vpon this and the like, *Balak* preſuming or at leaſt imagining, that honour and preferment would winne him to come, ſends againe moe Princes and more honorable than the former, and they come unto him with this ſecond meſſage, that he ſhould not be ſtaied from comming, becauſe the king had ſaid, *I will promote thee to great honour, and doe whatſoever thou ſayeſt unto me.* Therefore come and doe as I would have thee; *Only curſe me this people.* Here the falſe Prophet, although at the firſt he pretended great ſincerity, *That though the king would give him his houſe full of gold and ſilver, yet he could not goe beyond the word of the Lord, to doe leſſe or more,* (and it is very like that at the firſt time he ſpake according as he meant) yet hauing a covetous heart and loving the wages of iniquity (as *Iude* ſpeaks) he will not content himſelfe with his firſt anſwer from God, (though it was moſt reſolute) becauſe it would not ſerve his turne, to fit his covetouſneſſe and his ambition, but he will goe to aske of God againe. Whereupon God in his wrath and juſt judgement, anſwereth him more according to his heart: as he threatneth by *Ezekiel*. He bids him goe with them, ſeeing he will needs goe; and ſo gives him up to Sathan, and to the luſt of his owne wicked minde: wherein he is ſo violently caried, that although the Lord rebuke his ſenſleſneſſe by the dumbe beaſt, and terrifie him by his Angell, yea though he ſo over-rule him, that he cannot ſpeake nor doe any thing,

Verſ. 8.
Verſ. 9.
Verſ. 12.
Verſ. 17.

Iud. 11. O how fearefull is it, after a man hath received his reſolute anſwer from God, to goe upon carnall reſpects to inquire the ſecond time.

but

but what the Lord permits him; yet all this cannot make him to ſee his ſinne, nor to returne from his wicked way.

The ſecond preſident is as terrible as this, of the foure hundred Prophets of whom *Ahab* the king of *Iſrael* would aske counſel, becauſe they were wont to ſpeake good unto him, even according to his wiſh. God gives theſe Prophets up to Sathan, to let him to be a lying ſpirit in the mouthes of them all, to ſpeake as *Ahab* would have them, to ſooth him to his deſtruction. And the rather becauſe he will not in any caſe heare poore *Michaiah*, the true and good ſervant of the Lord, to aske of him; for that *Michaiah* was not wont to ſpeake to pleaſe him in what hee would, but uſed (as the King ſaith of him) *to prophecie evill unto him*. That is, to tell him of his ſinnes, and Gods juſt judgements according to the word of the Lord. This man was only ſet for God, having a good heart prepared and reſolved, only to ſpeake as might pleaſe the Lord, though all men ſpake otherwiſe; and not to pleaſe men more than might be for their ſalvation, and ſo as in pleaſing them he might pleaſe the Lord, though it coſt him his life. So this man being of an upright heart is only guided aright by the Lord; thereſt having evill hearts are palpably deluded in his juſt vengeance. So terrible is the Lord our God, to all who draw neere to aske of his mouth in hypocriſie, either in a deſire to continue in their ſinne, or without a full and cheerefull reſolution, to yeeld to whatſoever truth he ſhall reveale unto them; and ſo likewiſe to every one, who doth not together with the truth, receive the love of it. And therefore much more is he ſo to all thoſe, who preſuming to ſtand up in his place and to be his mouth, dare yet ſeeke themſelves, whether their honour or commoditie, or their peace and ſafety, or whatſoever elſe; and not his glory alone, with their owne ſalvation, and the wealth and ſaving of his people.

Thus have we the queſtion anſwered. Wherein we may behold the ſpirituall vengeance, in this ſinne of approving wicked Paſtors, namely the deceiving and hardening of the people to deſtruction, and to endleſſe condemnation in all who repent not thereof. We have alſo ſeene the righteouſneſſe of God in it, becauſe they would not receive the love of the truth to reſt in it, and obey it cheerefully, but tooke pleaſure in unrighteouſneſſe.

Now

Verſ. 20. *Num.* 22. 20. 22.

The ſecond enſample of *Ahab*. 1. *King.* 22. 6.

19.
20.
21.
22.

Verſ. 8.

Verſ. 7.
13.
14.

27.

The temporall plague threatned to be both alike.

Now for the temporall judgement threatned for this sinne by both these Prophets, (to wit *Micha* and *Ieremie* in those places where they complaine of this sinne) it is thus much in effect; That as all both Priests and people, thus consented together in their sins against the Lord, so they should all receiue the same punishment together. *The punishment of the Prophet should be as the punishment of him that asked*; as the Prophet *Ezekiel* sheweth; *and so the punishment of him that asked and was deceived, as the punishment of the deceiver*: save only that the punishment of the seducers must needs be far more heavie; as God cursed the serpent more heavily, and so the vengeance must begin at the Sanctuary. More particularly the Lord for this sinne threatned this speciall plague of the Captivitie long before in the daies of *Hezekiah*: That he would surely gather them all together wholly; meaning the remnant both of *Iudah* and *Israel*: but not as the flattring Prophets had told them, to an outward glory, but to their destruction, as a flock of sheepe driven away, and folded up in a strange land. Though he deferred this for (at the least) threescore yeares, at the humiliation & praiers of *Hezekiah* and other the servants of the Lord: But when they renued and increased this iniquitie more than ever before; *Ieremie* in consideration of the long threatned vengeance, and as it were hard before it, having asked *what they would do in the end*; that is, what they would grow unto, bids them for this to *prepare to flie out of Ierusalem, because of the destruction that appeared out of the North*, meaning the Captivitie by the *Babylonians*: And so was that fully accomplished in the temporall judgement, as it had beene before in the spirituall, *That the Sunne should goe downe over the Prophets, and the day be made darke over them*. And so the Seers be ashamed and confounded perpetually.

Ezech 14. 10. But that the punishment of the seducers must needs be more heavie. *Gen.* 3. 14, 15. *Mich.* 2. 12.

Ier. 26. 19.

Mic. 3. 6, 7.

Application] The application hereof I leave to our owne selves, as in his presence who trieth the heart and reines, and will be thus sanctified in vengeance, in all who in such manner draw neere to inquire of him, having set up their stumbling blocks in their hearts, and hath caused this to be written for our warning.

Hitherto of the peoples behaviour towards the wicked Priests and false Prophets, and how wickednesse did from them flow generally

generally unto the people, to approve of them contrary to their knowledge and conſcience, to be hardned thereby. Now to come to their behaviour and affection towards the holy Prophets and true ſervants of the Lord.

Abomination 7.

Of the ſinnes of the people againſt the faithfull Prophets, ſent to them in mercie, to bring them to repentance; for their affections and carriage towards them. And firſt their grieving them by their ſenſleſneſſe in learning Gods word.

Covenant.] Whereas the Lord had in mercie done many great things for them, that they might glorifie him by their holy obedience, and enjoy both preſent and eternall happineſſe with him, eſcaping his judgements: they anſwered moſt evilly. Firſt, he had raiſed up unto them Prophets according to their deſire, and to his promiſe made unto them, Deut. 18. 15, 16, 17. &c. even of their brethren like unto *Moſes*; becauſe they were not able to heare his owne glorious voice and live. Secondly, he had put his word into the mouth of thoſe Prophets, to ſpeake only whatſoever he commanded, with this ſevere commination unto the people, for all his faithfull Prophets denounced by *Moſes* long before, that whoſoever would not hearken unto them, he would require it at their hands, and cut them off from among his people. Laſtly, he gave them theſe to be unto them not only as his meſſengers, but as their ſpirituall fathers; as their Paſtors and watchmen to feed and preſerve them continually. And therefore their affections and behaviours towards them ſhould have beene as towards ſuch indeed; That is, as toward men of God, yea as to meſſengers ſent from his Highneſſe for their ſalvation; As to their ſpirituall fathers, begetting and nouriſhing them with the word of life. Finally, as towards thoſe who watched for their ſoules; even as Chriſts owne ſheepe towards their true ſhepherds; to have ſought the Law at their mouthes; To have knowne them and their

All you who are the people of the Lord, behold your duties and affections to all his faithful meſſengers ſent unto you. *Deut.* 18. 15, 16, 17, 18.

Acts 3. 22.

Mal. 2. 7. *Iohn* 10. 3, 4.

2 *Theſſ.* 5.12,13. *Eſay* 8.8.

2 *King.* 2.22.
2 *Cor.* 5.20.
Heb. 13.17.
Gen. 6.3.
1 *Pet.* 3.19,20.

2 *Chron.* 36.15, 16.

Tranſgreſſiõ.

2 *Chron.* 36.15, 16.

The firſt generall ſinne of the people grieving the true Prophets.

An extreme dulneſſe to learne the word of the Lord.

their voices, and only to have obeyed and followed them: To have had them in a ſingular love for their works ſake: And in all things to have carried the affections of children towards them, as the good people of the Lord ever have done: And in a word, to have received them as Angels of God, ſent from heaven, or as Chriſt Ieſus, (like as the Galathians did *Paul*) for theſe Prophets were among them, teaching and reconciling in the name of God. So that they ſhould ever have beene carefull to have given them all contentment and comfort, that they might have done their duties with joy. They ought to have beene afraid of grieving them, and much more of grieving the Spirit of the Lord in them, whereby he did ſtrive with them that he might ſave them, and that his anger might not be powred out upon them in that heavie manner. And to conclude, whereas they ſhould have beene more dutifull unto theſe meſſengers of God now at this time, than ever before, in as much as the Lords compaſſion was now more evident towards them in this mercie, than ever it had beene in former ages, in raiſing up unto them moe of his holy Prophets together, and in cauſing them to take more paines, and be more earneſt for reclaiming the people than ever we read of in any age before: and ſtill more vehement as the judgement approched neerer: yet it was cleane contrarie with them.

Tranſgreſſion.] The Lord complaines of them, that what through their deſire to walke in the luſts of their owne evill hearts, and withall through their liking and approbation of the wicked Prieſts and falſe Prophets, which by all meanes fought the diſgrace of theſe his ſervants, they carried themſelves quite otherwiſe towards them, for in ſtead of thus receiving and reverencing them, or of rejoycing their ſpirits, they did the more grieve the Spirit of the Lord in them, and kindle his wrath by abuſing them untill there was no remedie.

And herein they proceeded by ſundrie degrees. For, firſt this had beene a very generall ſinne amongſt them all for a long time, and which the Lord had very grievouſly complained of, to wit, an extreme untowardneſſe in them to learne the word of the Lord, with a marvellous backwardneſſe and frowardneſſe againſt it, though they were taught never ſo plainly and familiarly,

liarly, yea though they were catechized, as it were, from point to point, as young children, yet were they farre more uncapable than the little ones: there was amongst them, for most part, a strange loathing and contemning of that heavenly Manna. They were conceited that they had knowledge enough, and that all the talking and labour of the true Prophets was but idle, vaine, and needlesse, that they terrified and troubled the people without any cause.

The Prophet *Esay* he cries out of this, rebuking that dulnesse and wayward nesse in them to be taught Gods word, by questioning thus: *Whom shall he teach knowledge, or whom shall he make to understand the thing that he heareth? Them that are wained from the milke, and drawne from the breasts*: that is, the little children, which first beginne to speake, with whom the nurse stammers to teach them to speake and understand a little. *For* (saith he) *precept must be upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little.* As if he should say, They must be taught as little children a little at once, and have it oft repeated over and over, and yet they can learne nothing to doe them good, chiefly concerning their repentance and escaping Gods judgements. And the Lord he gives the reason hereof, because they imagined that they had knowledge enough. Whereupon they used very generally to scorne the true Prophets, (who told them of their sinnes) and all the paines that they tooke with them. And as for the anger of God which they threatned; *it should not come on them, their words were but winde.* Though a scourge came upon the land, as the Prophets threatned, yet everie man thought he could save one, or escape as well as the rest. That by the meanes of the wicked Priests and false Prophets (who never or seldome troubled the people with any such kinde of teaching, but only speaking for a fashion, and such as should not offend them, and studying how to disgrace these) they hardned themselves to contemne or neglect all wholsome and powerfull instructions out of Gods word given for their repentance and salvation.

Esayes complaint. *Esay* 28. 9.

Ierem. 8. 8.

Esay 28. 14, 15.

Ierem. 5. 12, 13.

Esay 56. 9, 10, 11, 12.

Though some had knowledge, yet commonly no grace to obey.

Secondly, howsoever some of them had understanding and knowledge in the word for the letter of it, yet they ordinarily had none in their hearts to make conscience of it, to seeke by

by it to pacifie the Lord, or to hide themselves from his wrath.

Esay 1. 1, 2, 3.

Of this did the Prophet *Esay* grievously complaine, in the very beginning of his prophecie, calling heaven and earth to witnesse against them, that herein they were generally worse than the Oxe and the Asse, because *the Oxe knew his owner, the Asse his masters crib, but Israel knew him not, his people had no understanding.* That is, they had no true understanding of his judgements or mercies, by them to learne to repent, or to make any good use of them. Which he proves hereby, for that though he had nourished them up as his children; yet they rebelled against him. They provoked him to anger; they went backward from him more and more, let him smite them or doe what he would: which shewed evidently that they knew him not at all, with any sanctified and powerfull knowledge, to turne them from their evill wayes.

But worse than the Oxe.

Vers. 2.

Vers. 5. Being worse for smiting.

The Prophet *Ieremie* also after him, complaines as much of them for this; lamenting that they were more senslesse than any of the dumbe creatures. *Even the Storke* (saith he) *knoweth her appointed times, the Turtle and the Crane, and the Swallow, observe the time of their comming, but my people knoweth not the judgement of the Lord:* that is, when their sins are ripe to the sickle of Gods vengeance, and that he is comming in judgement. And then he asketh how they could say that *they were wise, that the Law of the Lord was with them? Because certainly in vaine did the Lord make it, the pen of the Scribes was but in vaine.* The Prophets meaning is, because they did not regard the Law of God, nor the curses threatned in it, which his justice required, and he was now readie to powre downe upon their heads, therefore was all in vaine unto them. And thence he likewise proves his complaint of their senslesnesse to be just, like as the Prophet *Esay* had done: Because they were *turned backe by a perpetuall rebellion. No man repented him of his wickednesse, saying what have I done? but every man rushed to his owne race, as the horse to the battell.* The word and threatnings of Gods judgements in it, which he was readie to execute, could nothing at all stop them: which it would certainly have done, if they had knowne it aright. Whereupon he saith, *They have cast away the word of the Lord, and what wisdome can be in them?* As if the Prophet should

Jerem. 8. 7. *Ieremies* complaint of this.

Vers. 8. The word of the Lord is in vaine to a rebellious people.

Vers. 5, 6.

Vers. 9.

should say, They imagine that they have knowledge, but having cast away my word, and the feare of my judgements, what wisdome can be in them? Then he gives the reason of it in the next words, which was the corrupt dealing of the wicked Priests and Prophets. Concerning whom he brings in the Lord likewise complaining thus: *They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people with sweet words, saying, Peace, peace, when there was no peace.* They still perswaded the people of their safetie, and that there was no such plague or judgement hanging over them, as the true Prophets denounced against them. And thus they being blinde made the people blinde: The spirit of slumber thus covered them all, as we heard before. Hereby came their destruction; as God complaines in *Hosea*, saying, *my people perish for lacke of knowledge*; meaning for lacke of this true knowledge, especially of Gods displeasure for their sinne. And so his controversie was both with Israel and Iudah, both being in like case herein, because there was no knowledge of God in the land. There was none of this true powerfull knowledge to turne them from their evill way. Thus have we seene the first part of the peoples sinne against the true Prophets, in grieving them by their grosse ignorance, and in not receiving and learning Gods word to awaken them out of their securitie. Now let us come to the vengeance threatned for this.

They that cast away Gods word, have no wisdome.

Vers. 11.

Esay 29.9.

Hos. 4.6.

Hos. 4.1.

Threatning.] For a just recompence of all this their backwardnesse and untowardnesse, the Lord denounceth this vengeance, which he accomplished untill they were destroyed: *That his word should be unto them, precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line unto line, line unto line, here a little, and there a little, that they might goe and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.* That is, that the Lord would so order this blockish senslesnesse, that they should be daily lesse able to discerne or to feare his judgement untill it came upon their heads. And then when it once came, there should be nothing but feare day and night, to make them to understand that which they had heard: To cause all them who could not learne by the paines and mildnesse of the Lords Prophets, to learne by the crueltie of their enemies, (when they should be captives in a forraine land) even by men of a strange language, which they understood not, as the

Threatning. See the vengeance due for not stirring up our hearts to profit by the word of the Lord.

Esay 28. 13. God punisheth this sinne by more blockishnesse.

Vers. 18. God will cause them who cannot learne by his servants, to learne by his enemies.

Deut. 28.49.

the Lord had threatned them in his Law: becauſe they would not learne at home in peace by all the plainneſſe and paines, that the Lord tooke with them by his owne faithfull ſervants, early and late. Thus alſo he denounceth this righteous vengeance, that all the preaching and paines of his owne holy Prophets amongſt them, ſhould be effectuall through their ſinnes and his juſt judgement to blinde and harden all ſuch deſpiſers, to make their hearts fat againſt the day of ſlaughter. All ſhould be but a ſavour of death to death unto them, to prepare them for deſtruction; and all that carnall wiſdome of theirs, which was their arme, ſhould wither and periſh, and not be able to ſtand them in any ſtead in the day of wrath.

Eſay 6. 10.

Eſay 29. 14.

The wicked are more blinded and hardned accidentally through Gods ſervants by their owne ſinne.

Application.] Now a little to apply this; becauſe we are commonly very dull herein to make right uſe and benefit of the word to our ſelves: Hath not this judgement beene ſo fearefully upon us, and this ſinne ſo generall, at leaſt in our parts, in the heart of the land, and I feare others to be too like for moſt part, as that there are or have beene very few faithfull Miniſters of Chriſt amongſt us, who have not had long and dolefull experience hereof? That they have done leſſe good amongſt all the elder ſort, and men of much worldly wiſdome, even moſt of the chiefe of their Congregations, for bringing them to any ſound and comfortable knowledge in Gods word, than amongſt little children. Hath not this beene and is a moſt ordinary complaint amongſt them, that after many yeares labour and toyling, in preaching and catechizing, moſt plainly and familiarly, they have yet hardly brought very few of their Congregation, amongſt many, to any true comfortable knowledge of Ieſus Chriſt and the way of ſalvation; and to make any right conſcience of their wayes: or ſo much as to come to any ſound love of the truth, or feare of the Lord; ſo as to be carefull for teaching and inſtructing their families, for the ſaving of themſelves, and the ſoules committed to them? Nay, which is yet more lamentable (that I may utter it with griefe of heart) hath not this beene too uſuall a complaint of many a godly man with us, who hath wearied and ſpent himſelfe to doe good among his people, that yet he hath brought very few of them, if any, to a ſenſe or love of religion; to any feeling of their ſinnes or feare of Gods judgements?

ments? that they have ſeemed to have juſt cauſe to lament with the Prophet *Eſay*, *I have laboured in vaine, and ſpent my ſtrength in vaine.* (Only this hath the Lord vouchſafed to ſuch men who have laboured faithfully, to give unto them haply ſome few to be the ſeales of their miniſteries, as the children which he hath granted them for their comfort and confirmation, that they may be more aſſured of their calling from God, and that their labour and reward is with him.) And this partly through evill enſamples on every ſide, and more ſpecially through a vaine conceit in the people of their knowledge and eſtate, whereby they ſcorne to be taught: but principally (as we are juſtly to feare, at leaſt againſt ſuch Congregations) by that heavie judgement thus farre accompliſhed upon them: *That by hearing they ſhould heare and not underſtand, and ſeeing ſee and not perceive*, but to be made more blinde, and as it were prepared for deſtruction. How may the meditation hereof make us all to tremble, eſpecially all of us who live in ſuch places, where we may daily ſee or heare too wofull experience hereof in the Countreyes about us, for feare of the ſame ſenſleſneſſe to be ſtill increaſed untill that wrath doe come indeed. And if it be ſo with theſe Congregations under the moſt able, painfull, holy, and conſcionable Miniſters, what may we feare of all the reſt under the Miniſters leſſe able or faithfull? How may this make us to ſigh and hang downe our heads? and what may they give us juſt cauſe to dread?

Eſay 49. 4. 65. 2.

Eſay 8. 18.

Eſay 6. 9.

Eſay 65. 2, 3. *Rom.* 10. end.

Abomination 8.

Of the ſinne of the people againſt the true Prophets, in that they would not heare them more than by conſtraint.

ANother degree of their ſin againſt the true Prophets, and the word of the Lord ſent unto them by their miniſterie, was this: That they would not heare the word from them. They could be content to heare for a faſhion, and would applaud the flattering and falſe Prophets, by whom they got no

The ſecond ſinne againſt the true Prophets, that the people would not heare them.

no good, but were more hardned, but the true Prophets they would not endure, so much as they could avoid them. The Lord bids, *that this sinne above all, be noted in a booke for the last day for ever and ever*; that it might be a witnesse against them to all posteritie, both of their rebellion and of his righteous judgement. Then he sets downe the sinne particularly, that *they were a rebellious people, lying children that would not heare the word of the Lord.* They would heare it (as it plainly appeareth) by the flatterers and time-servers, but not by the Lords faithfull Prophets, unlesse they would speake as they would. This the Prophet *Esay* sets out in these words: That *they would say unto the Seers, see not, and unto the Prophets, propheſie not to us right things, but speake flattering things unto us, propheſie errours, depart out of the way, goe aside out of the path, cause the holy one of Israel to cease from us.* The meaning of the Holy Ghost seemes plainly to be this, that they said thus in effect, in that they did this. They could not for shame speake it in word, to bid the Prophets to flatter them, or to teach them errours or lies, or that they should turne out of the way of God, as the other Prophets, or to tell them no more of the judgements of the Lord; this had beene too palpable. But thus much they spake plainly by all their practises and proceedings, when as they did so favour and extoll the flatterers and time-servers, and all those who would never trouble them with telling them of their sinnes or Gods judgements: but used contrarily all scornfull and malicious dealings against the faithfull Prophets, as these words doe witnesse, even against all that reproved them for their evill wayes, yea, as the Prophet saith before, *They tooke him in a snare which reproved them in the gate, and made the iust to fall without cause.* By which their proceedings they intended either to wearie and discourage all Gods true Prophets, or to terrifie them so, as that they should not any more tell them of their sinnes. At least they undoubtedly sought hereby one way or other to stop their mouthes, that they might sleepe quietly in their sinnes, and not be troubled any further with threatnings from that holy one; which is meant by that phrase, that they should cause the holy one of Israel to cease from them.

Esay 30. 8. The sin must be noted in a booke of Gods remembrance.

Vers. 9. The Lords complaint for it.

Vers. 10.

Vers. 11.

Esa. 29. 21.

Esay 30. 11.

Mic. 2. 6.

The Prophet *Micah* hath the very like complaint, and about the

the same time; where he declares that this sinne was one evident cause and fore-runner of this vengeance: How they said *unto them that prophecied, prophecie not.* Or as others translate it, according to the proprietie of the originall, *Drop not ye, let these drop.* As if they should say, Preach not ye that so sharply tell us of our sinnes, and have nothing but denunciation of vengeance: let these drop on us, which drop more sweetly and pleasantly, or preach more mildly. So that it is plaine, that they would not heare these willingly: and if they came to heare them, yet it was but for some noveltie or rarenesse of their gifts; or which was farre worse, to make jests and scoffe, or to carpe, but not to reforme any thing that they heard amisse. This was their manner of comming to heare this our Prophet *Ezekiel*, as the Lord himselfe complaines, saying thus unto him: *Also thou sonne of man, the children of thy people that talke of thee,* [or *against thee*, as the new translation hath it] *and in the doores of their houses, and speake one to another, every one to his neighbour, Come I pray you and heare what is the word that commeth from the Lord; for they come unto thee as the people useth to come, and sitteth before thee as my people, and heare thy words, but they will not do them, for with their mouths they * make iests, but their hearts run after their covetousnesse. And loe thou art unto them "as a iesting song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and that can sing well; for they heare thy words, but they will not doe them.* And thus have we seene the Lord himselfe setting out their sinne herein, that they would not heare his faithfull servants unlesse in this manner or the like.

The complaint of *Micah* for this sinne.

Ezek. 33. 30, 31, 32.

The Lord complaines for their abusing of the ministerie of *Ezekiel* thus.

Vers. 30.

Vers. 31.

How the people used to heare him.

* *shew love.*

Vers. 32.

" *As a very lovely song.*

Vengeance] Now to come to the vengeance for this sinne. The Lord tels the people, concerning these Prophets, and for this and the like dealing, that *they should not prophecie, neither take shame.* As he shewed *Ezekiel*, that *he would make his tongue cleave to the roofe of his mouth, that he should be dumbe and not rebuke them* so as he was wont, *because they were a rebellious house*; that is, they were such as cast off the Lord and his true Prophets, and would only heare flatterers. Further also by the Prophet *Micah* he expostulates the matter with them in this manner: *Oh thou that art named the house of Iacob, is the Spirit of the Lord shortned? are these his works?* meaning, thus to cast away his word.

Vengeance.

Mic. 2. 6.

Behold the just vengeance for this sinne.

Ezech. 3. 26.

For the contempt of Gods servants, he makes their tongues cleave to the roofe of their mouthes.

Mic. 2. 7.

God takes away his servants for this sinne.

word. *Are not my words* (saith he) *good to him that walketh uprightly?* that is, to every good man. *But he that was yesterday my people, is risen up on the other side, as against an enemie*; meaning, against me, my truth and servants. And so the Lord proceedeth there, complaining of *spoiling his people that did passe by peaceably, casting out the women of his people from their pleasant houses*; and for *taking his glory from their children continually*; by driving them out from their houses indeed, as it may seeme, or at least from their communion and comfort which they should have had in Gods house, in the worship and service of the Lord, called the glory of the Lord. And whereas they might imagine, that if they were once shut of these fellowes, that did so trouble them with telling them of their sinnes, then all should be well, and they at rest, when they might live as they lifted; The Lord in the next words bids them *arise and depart, for that was not their rest*; they had so *polluted it*, meaning by that and all other their oppressions and horrible sinnes, that *it should destroy them with a sore destruction*: it should cast them out, as they had cast out the true Prophets of the Lord. And then againe amplifying this their sinne, in forbidding the true Prophets to prophecie, and in magnifying those who would prophecie of wine and strong drinke, that is, all the lewdest men, as being the only Preachers for them; he threatneth to gather them wholly to destruction for it, as we heard before. Reade the beginning of the next chapter, and compare.

Verſ. 8.
Verſ. 9.
Verſ. 10.
Apoc. 11. 5.

The same vengeance threatned by *Esay*.

The Prophet *Esay* he tels them likewise, in the place before mentioned, where he complaines of this same sinne of discouraging and rejecting the true Prophets; That hereby they did what they could to draw downe the vengeance of God upon their heads, and utterly to over-turne their whole commonwealth; saying thus unto them: *Therefore thus saith the Lord the holy one of Israel, Because you have cast away this word, and doe trust in violence and wickednesse, and stay thereupon: Therefore this iniquitie shall be unto you as a breach that falleth, or as a swelling in an high wall, whose breach commeth suddenly in a moment, so as no sheard is left, to take fire from the hearth, or water out of the pit.* As if he should say, In this your wickednesse, that you will not heare the word of the Lord, but say unto the *Seers see not*, &c.

Esay 30. 12.
Verſ. 12.
Verſ. 13.
Verſ. 14.
Verſ. 9.

&c. *Cause the holy one of Israel to cease from us*, and the like, you so deale as if you should shew all your strength and cunning to plucke upon your owne heads the wall of your common-wealth now already hanging and inclining to fall, through Gods anger, upon you: that so ye may be dashed in peeces, without hope of delivery or recovery. And thus it shall come unto you. *Vers.* 10.

And thus much also for this. Lord open our eyes, in all things to apply aright, to prevent the like vengeance. Now to a higher step of their wickednesse herein towards the true Prophets.

Abomination 9.

Mocking and abusing the true Prophets, and denying their word to be the word of the Lord, hastening the Captivitie.

TO proceed yet further, when they could not by all the former meanes stop the mouthes of all the true Prophets of the Lord, whether because they were sheltered by their good magistrates, as *Ezekiah*, *Iosiah*, and others, or by their good lawes, or by some other meanes which it pleased the Lord to raise up, for their freedome and continuance; yet they ceased not to use against them all other kind of despightfull dealing, that they could possibly devise, so farre as they were any way able, to discountenance them, yea to discourage and weary them out.

A third maine sinne against the true Prophets, to load them and all the godly with mocks and scornes. *Esay* 8. 18.

As first this had beene an ancient practise to load them with mocks and scornes, and not only them themselves, but also all that approved of thē, or who feared God amongst them. Which are therefore called the children which God gave unto the Prophets, because they were won by them, and depended upon their ministry, drawing from thence the heavenly milke; for from the daies of *Esay* they had beene wont to make these as *signes & wonders*, accounting them as monsters, the vildest of the land, and such as were not worthy to live upon the face of the earth. Because these onely beleeved the word of the Lord and his threatnings, and did abhor the sins of the rest, fearing the judgements which they saw were ready to be powred down upon their heads in full viols, for the ouerflowing of all iniquity amongst them.

The

Ieremie ready to leave over his preaching for the abuses offered him for the same.
Ier. 20. 7, 8, 10.

The poore Prophet *Ieremie* is a notable spectacle hereof, making a pittifull complaint for this very cause: That the word of the Lord which he preached, was made a reproach unto him: he was in derision daily for it; every one jesting and railing at him. In so much as the holy servant of God was so discouraged, that he resolved to have utterly given up his calling, never to have preached any more amongst them, but to have let them to have perished in their sinnes, leaving their bloud upon their owne heads, for their despising and casting him off. And this had he done if the almighty power of the Lord, even his holy word and spirit within him, had not staied him up miraculously, and beene as a fire in his bones, so that he could not forbeare. Yea how could it otherwise have beene? for they denied the word which he preached, to be the word of the Lord, and said in effect that the evils which came upon them, as famine or whatsoever, came not from the Lord, but by some chance, it was not he that did it. The false Prophets also to increase their griefe, hardened the people in their sins, and especially in this kinde of Atheisme, that it was not the Lord who brought any of their plagues in his anger. And in their sermons they used to warrant them that *God would give them an assured peace in that place, they should not see any such plague* as *Ieremie* and the other Prophets threatned, neither *should they see the sword nor famine.* The *words of those* timorous *Prophets were but as the winde, they were not to be regarded.* Thus dealt they in like manner with *Ezekiel*, whereupon he also powreth out his complaint into the bosome of the Lord in this sort: Ah Lord doe they not say of me that he speaketh parables. But *Ieremie* is so farre overcarried with this temptation, that through the grievousnesse of it, he breakes out after a sort to expostulate with the Lord, that if he was deceived (as it was generally affirmed of him) that then the Lord had deceived him; for he had spoken nothing but what he had put into his mouth. And thus we see how hereby they did misuse the poore Prophets of the Lord, and grieve Gods holy spirit within them.

Verſ. 9. Gods holy word is a fire in the bones of his servants, that they cannot forbeare preaching so long as they may, notwithstanding all indignities.
Ier. 5. 12.
Verſ. 12. The custome of false Prophets to harden men in the contempt of Gods threatnings.
Ier. 14. 13.
Ier. 5. 12.
Ezek. 33. 30.
Ier. 20. 7.

Vengeance] Now let us come to the vengeance of God, which he denounceth against them for thus denying his word, sent unto them by his true messengers. The Lord himselfe tels them, that

Ezek. 13. 29. God will make unbeleevers

that howſoever they ſaid *it was not he*, yet when he had laied their land deſolate for all their abominations, then *ſhould they know that it was he that had ſpoken* unto them, and ſmitten them, and that it was not by chance, although they would not beleeve it before. And to *Ieremie* he ſaith likewiſe, that they ſhould know that his words were not winde; for, becauſe that they ſaid ſo; *he would put his words into Ieremies mouth, as a fire, and the people ſhould be as wood, and it ſhould devoure them:* meaning that the judgements which he denounced againſt them, ſhould conſume them as fire. And further alſo he ſaith to the Prophet *Ezekiel*, that when all this came to paſſe, as he and the other Prophets had threatned, then *they ſhould know that there had beene a Prophet amongſt them.* To conclude this point. Thus indeed did the Lord verifie his words in the Captivitie, for the Prophet *Zachary* he ſhewes plainly, that then in their miſeries they acknowledged how the word of the Lord had taken hold upon them, in the righteous accompliſhment of all that which he had before denounced againſt them by his Prophets, for then they were inforced to confeſſe it even the proudeſt of them, bewailing their ſinne thus, when it was too late to turne away this vengeance: *As the Lord of hoaſts* (ſay they) *had determined to doe unto us, according to our owne waies, and according to our works, ſo hath he dealt with us.* And this may ſuffice for their ſinne in ſcorning the Prophets, and denying or making light of his word threatned by them, and the vengeance for it.

To aſcend yet to ſome higher degrees of their wickedneſſe againſt the true Prophets, and after to apply them all together.

know the truth of his word by feeling it.

Ier. 5. 14.

The word in the mouthes of Gods meſſengers, ſhall be as a fire to conſume all wicked gaine-ſayers.

Ezek. 33. 33.

Zach. 1. 6. Thus ſhall all wicked ſinners acknowledge when it is too late.

Zach. 1. 6.

Application after.

Abomination 10.

Threatning the true Prophets, and so discouraging them thereby, hastening the Captivitie.

A fourth sinne discouraging the Prophets by threatning.

ANother and a higher degree of abusing the holy Prophets of the Lord, to kindle his anger yet more, was this: That not being content to mocke and scorne their admonitions, they practised further by threatnings to discourage them, and to make them to leave off from preaching against their sins any more, or telling them of Gods judgements due thereunto. Herein the Lord himselfe declares how *Ieremie* was used by his townsmen, the men of *Anathoth*; who indeed having great cause to have rejoyced and praised God, for such a worthy Prophet raised up amongst them, and to have shewed him all love and kindnesse; yet they in stead hereof, forbade him *to preach any more unto them in the name of the Lord. For if he did he should die by their hands:* meaning that they would surely dispatch him one way or other. The like we may see in other places also, how when of a time he had denounced Gods judgements in a great assembly, as God had appointed him, *the Priests and Prophets and all the people, tooke him and said, thou shalt die the death.*

Ier. 11. 21.

Ier. 11. 21.

Ier. 26. 8.

Vengeance] For this very sinne of theirs the Holy Ghost saith, the Lord therefore thus speakes *of the men of Anathoth that seeke thy life and say, Prophecy not in the name of the Lord that thou die not by our hands. Behold I will visit them, their young men shall die by the sword, their sons and their daughters shall die by famine,* and so threats that none of them should remaine, because he would bring a plague upon them, even the yeere of their visitation. And for that their generall threatning of him, in the court of the Lords house; that they all told him, that he should die: *Ieremie* thus answers boldly unto the Princes and people, saying, *The Lord hath sent me to prophecy against this house, and against this Citie, all the things that ye have heard. Therefore now amend your waies, and your works, and heare the voice of the Lord your God, that he may repent him of the plague that he hath pronounced against you. As for me, behold I am in your hands, doe with me*

Ier. 11. 21, 22.

See what it is to threaten Gods messengers, for doing their messages faithfully.

Ier. 26. 2.

Vers. 12.

13.

14.

me as you thinke good and right. But know ye for certaine, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent bloud upon your selves, and upon this City, and also upon the inhabitants thereof. For of a truth the Lord hath sent me unto you, to speake all these words in your eares. And so much also for discouraging Gods servants by threatnings, hastening the Captivitie.

See what we doe in hurting Gods faithfull messengers causlesse.

Abomination 11.

Cursing and slandering Gods messengers, hastening the Captivitie.

FRom all the former practises, they still proceeded to higher degrees of outrage, against those faithfull servants of God, to incense his majestie, as to curse and slander them, to cry out of them as of the wickedest men that lived upon the face of the earth, and such as their state could no way beare. Thus they provoked the Magistrates and all the chiefe against them, laying to their charge that they sought nothing but the overthrow of the common-wealth, and of that city; with the confusion & destruction of all the people. After this sort did the Priests and false Prophets accuse *Ieremie* to the Princes and to all the people, saying, *This man is worthy of death, for he hath prophecied against this City as you have heard with your eares.* At which time though God raised up some of the Rulers to speake for *Ieremie*, after that they had heard his apologie, and so delivered him from their hands; yet the Holy Ghost sheweth how soone after, by the like slanderous accusation, they had so incenced the Princes & rulers against him, that they sought his life, and accused him as grievously as any of the rest; even they who before were his onely friends: Insomuch as when of themselves they could not put him to death, nor yet proceed against him as they would, whether they were hindered by their holy lawes, or for that great favour that the King did beare unto him, (as appeareth by divers places of his prophecie, and as we shall see more afterwards) yet they besought the King to put him to death. For they laid this to his charge, *That he discouraged the people by his preaching, and*

A fifth degree, cursing and slandering Gods faithfull messengers. Incensing the magistrates against them by false accusations.

Ier. 26. 11.

Magistrates who before favoured *Ieremie* incensed by false accusations to beseech the king to put him to death.

Ier. 38. 4.

Ier. 37. 3. 17.
Ier. 38. 5.

and weakned the hands of the men of war, he sought not the wealth of the people, but their hurt. They through that wrong suggestion against him dealt with him thereupon, as *Amaziah* the Priest of *Bethel* dealt with obedient *Amos* before *Israels* Captivitie; complaining to the king, *that Amos had conspired against him in the midst of the house of Israel, the land was not able to beare all his words.* But alas, did innocent *Ieremie* seeke the hurt of that people whom he loved so tenderly, as he could have wished to have wept day and night for them, because of their impenitencie and the miseries that were ready to come upon them? No, no, all that ever he sought was their wealth both bodily and spirituall, temporall and everlasting, and that by turning them from their evill waies. For when there was no other remedie (through their owne obstinacie, who would not turne unto the Lord) but his vengeance, to wit, the *Chaldeans* must needs come upon them; he onely as *Amos* still forewarnes them, and in pittifull compassion directs them what means the Lord had yet left them how to escape their violence and fury; which was by yeelding themselves peaceably unto the enemie, as God had shewed him. And indeed most happy had it beene for them, if they had so done, as the miserable event of their contrary standing out against the Lord did manifestly declare.

Amos. 7. 12.

Ier. 9. 1.
How unlike it was that ever *Ieremie* should seeke their hurt.
Ier. 37. 18.
Ier. 18. 20.

Ier. 38. 2.

Besides these particular accusations and slanders, it had beene an ordinary thing for him to be railed upon daily, for a long while, even in all the time of his preaching: for so he saith; *Since I spake I cried out of wrongs, and proclaimed desolation, therefore the word was made a reproach unto me, I am in derision daily.* He did as the other Prophets, who still cried out against their sinnes, and proclaimed this vengeance, and so all their portions were alike. This very affliction did touch him so neerely, that long before this he cried out for it, bewailing the time that ever he was borne, in this sort as followeth: *Woe is me my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of contention, a man that striveth with the whole earth.* For so they accounted him, a troublesome fellow, one that troubled every place whersoever he came. Though as he saith there, *he had neither given nor taken upon usurie.* He had beene so farre off from hurting them any way, as that he had not used any dealings with them, but had lived apart,

Ordinary with Gods true Prophets to be railed upon.
Ier. 20. 8.

Esay 8. 18.
2. *Chron.* 36. 15.

Ier. 15. 10.

Ieremies innocencie.
Ier. 15. 10.
Ier. 15. 17.

apart, and only and wholly applied himſelfe to the due execution of his function, not medling with any other trade or calling. So as all the world was not able to touch him in any ſuch manner, as appeareth evidently; in that, for all their ſearching and deviſing matters againſt him, they could finde no occaſion or likelihood of matter, except as againſt *Daniel* for his faithfulneſſe to the Lord. Yet every one curſed him, as if he had beene a vile and wicked creature, and each had matters enow againſt faithfull *Ieremie*.

Dan.6.4,5. Ierem.18.18. & 20.10.

Vengeance.] The vengeance I will referre to the next ſtep of their ſinne, and ſhew both under one. To come therefore to the next degree.

Abomination 12.

Privie conſpiracies againſt the Lords Prophets to take away their lives, haſtening the Captivitie.

A fixth degree: By ſecret conſpiracies to take away the lives of Gods ſervants, or their credits, that no bodie ſhould regard them. *Ierem.11.17. Ierem.18.18.*

A Higher degree of their wickedneſſe againſt the Lords deare ſervants, yet more to anger him than all the former, was this: That when they could not diſcourage them by all thoſe other meanes to ſtop their mouthes, nor be ſhut of them any way; they conſpired together to deviſe ſome plots againſt them to cut them off: as to invent ſome accuſations that might touch their lives, or if they could not doe that, yet *to ſmite them with the tongue*, to raiſe up ſuch odious reports againſt them, that *no body ſhould regard any of their words*. Let them threaten or ſay what they would, yet none ſhould give any heed unto them, but account them as ſeditious fellowes, enemies to the ſtate, and ſuch as were in no caſe to be heard. Hereof the Lord hath cauſed moſt notable preſidents to be recorded even for all poſteritie, concerning that holy *Ieremie*, when they could touch him no other way, nor finde the leaſt matter againſt him. Their plots withall were ſo deepe, that the good man was never able to have knowne them, if the Lord himſelfe had not ſecretly revealed them unto him: for ſo ſaith *Ieremie* of himſelfe; *The Lord hath taught me* (ſaith he) *and I know it, even then thou ſhewedſt*

The Lord revealeth the moſt ſecret plots againſt his ſervants in due time. *Ierem.11.18.*

Verſ. 19.

ſhewedſt me their practiſes. But I was like a lambe or a bullocke that is brought to the ſlaughter, and I knew not that they had deviſed thus againſt me; when they ſaid, Let us deſtroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and cut him off from the land of the living, that his name may be no more in memorie. So in another place the Lord diſcovers unto him their moſt deepe and ſecret miſchiefes intended againſt him: How they ſaid, *Come and let us imagine ſome device againſt Ieremie; for the Law ſhall not periſh from the Prieſt, nor counſell from the wiſe, nor the word from the Prophet: Come, and let us ſmite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.* And yet ſtill more to provoke the Lord: this wickednesſe was not in ſome few alone, but it was generally over-ſpread; for the holy Prophet having ſhewed how everie bodie mocked him for crying out againſt their ſinne, ſaith, that *he heard the railings of many, and feare was on every ſide.* He was continually afraid of everie man, for ſome miſchievous device, of getting ſome matter to accuſe him for, to worke his overthrow: for it ſeemeth that any colour of matter was enough againſt ſuch a one as he was. Yea, he complaines of this wickednesſe, as of an injurie that did touch his heart, That his verie familiar friends, thoſe which pretended the greateſt kindneſſe towards him, watched to get opportunitie to catch him at ſome advantage, for one matter or other, that ſo they might execute their malice upon him. Whereby it appeares that almoſt all, in the end, came to be thus maliciouſly bent againſt him, and that not only to ſtop his mouth, to impriſon, or to baniſh him, but all tended to death, to have his bloud: It ſeemeth all did ſo, except thoſe alone who continued together with him in their integritie and ſinceritie. And this they did only for the conſcience he made to pleaſe the Lord, and his faithfull dealing in his office. Becauſe they could not live in their ſinnes as they liſted, but he was ſtill a checke and a reproach, yea a condemnation unto them both by his life and preaching, and ſtill troubled them continually, by denouncing againſt them the judgements of the Lord, and ſhewing them their ſinnes. And ſo much for this wickednesſe alſo.

Ier. 18. 18. The depth of Satan to ſmite Gods meſſengers with the tongue, that none may be warned by their preaching, to eſcape the vengeance of the Lord.

Ier. 20. 10.

Ieremies familiar friends watch for his halting.

Ier. 18 23.

Iob. 3. 20. & 7. 7.

Vengeance.

Vengeance.] Now upon the conſideration of this their ſo extreme malice, whereby they ſought againſt their conſciences, firſt

firſt thus to requite the Lord himſelfe, who had in ſuch mercie and infinite compaſſion ſent him unto them, that he might ſpare them: and ſecondly to reward him thus alſo, for all his paines and care for them, and for his crying to God to ſave them; and moreover, that nothing could ſatisfie them but only his bloud: This, I ſay, cauſed the holy Prophet in the zeale of Gods glorie, and being guided by his heavenly Spirit, to cry for vengeance againſt them; for he being a Prophet, the Lord ſhewed unto him their maliciouſneſſe, and directed him thus to pray; and in praying ſo, to prophecie what ſhould come to paſſe upon them, as indeed it did. Thus alſo *David* prayed oftentimes in like caſes (though no private man can have the like warrant, becauſe no man hath the like extraordinarie ſpirit as they, more than in generall to pray againſt Gods obſtinate and malicious enemies, and to confound all miſchievous devices, againſt him and his Church) But thus *Ieremie* prayed for vengeance to be taken upon them for this ſinne, in all the three places alledged, where mention is made of theſe their practiſes. In the firſt place whereof he prayeth thus: *But oh Lord of hoaſts that judgeſt righteouſly, and trieſt the reines and the heart, let me ſee thy vengeance on them, for unto thee I have opened my cauſe.* As if he ſhould have ſaid: Oh Lord who knoweſt mine innocencie and my heart towards them, and all their malicious practiſes againſt me, though contrived never ſo ſecretly and cunningly; Shew thy ſelfe therefore a juſt God in rewarding thine enemies; for unto thee have I opened my cauſe. I have none to whom to make my moane, but unto thee alone. And afterwards he denounceth that ſpeciall vengeance againſt the men of Anathoth as we heard. So in the ſecond place where they conſulted to *imagine ſome device againſt him, at leaſt to ſmite him with the tongue* (that is, ſo to ſlander him) *as no body ſhould give heed to any of his words:* he prayeth the Lord to hearken. And then reaſons with his Majeſtie thus, ſaying, *Shall evill be recompenced for good? for they have digged a pit for my ſoule: remember that I ſtood before thee to ſpeake good for them, and to turne away thy wrath from them.* Thereupon he enters into a fearefull execration againſt them, ſaying, *Therefore deliver up their children to the famine, and let them drop away by the force of the ſword. Let their wives be robbed*

Behold how fearefull a thing it is, againſt conſcience to practiſe miſchiefe againſt Gods ſervants.

See the terrible propheſies againſt ſuch wicked practiſes.

Ier. 11. 20.

Jer. 18. 18.

Verſ. 19.

Verſ. 21.

robbed of their children and be widowes. Let their husbands be put to death, and let their young men be ſlaine by the ſword in the battell. Let the cry be heard from their houſes, when thou ſhalt bring an hoaſt ſuddenly upon them, for they have digged a pit to take me, and laid ſnares for my feet. Laſtly, in that place he prayeth thus: *Lord thou knoweſt all their counſell againſt me tendeth to death, forgive not their iniquitie, neither put out their ſinne from thy ſight, but let them be overthrowne before thee.* Deale thou with them in the time of thine anger. In the third place againe is the like dreadfull execration, to that in the firſt place, *Ieremie* 11. with a ſtirring up the true ſervants of God, to praiſe the Lord for his wonderfull deliverances from all their treacheries thus: *Sing unto the Lord, praiſe ye the Lord: for he hath delivered the ſoule of the poore from the hand of the wicked*; intimating thereby, that if the Lord had not wrought wonderfully, he could never have eſcaped their devices, but they had found enough againſt him, to have brought him to death. By all which fearefull execrations, the Lord plainly declares, that of all ſinnes then reigning amongſt them, none did more cry for, and certainly foretell vengeance to come upon them, than this ſame ſinne of this ſecret plotting and conſpiring againſt thoſe his ſervants which he ſent unto them in ſuch tender compaſſion. Hitherto alſo of this abomination.

Ierem. 20. 12.
Ierem. 11. 20.

Abomination 13.

Striking and impriſoning Gods ſervants, haſtening the Captivitie.

The ſeventh degree, ſtriking and impriſoning Gods ſervants.

YEt to aſcend a little higher. The Lord complaines how they proceeded yet further, to tempt and to provoke him by all meanes, not only ſhewing their deſpight againſt him and his faithfull ſervants, by their tongues and ſecret practiſes, but alſo they came at length to lay hands upon his meſſengers, to ſmite and to impriſon them, for their prophecying. Though he had charged them directly to beware of this ſinne; ſaying, *Touch not mine Anointed, and doe my Prophets no harme.*

Pſal. 105. 15.

harme. As if he ſhould have ſaid, looke well to my Prophets, that ye doe not the leaſt harme to them, nor yet ſo much as touch them: for that howſoever I can forbeare you in many other ſinnes, yet in that I cannot, if you once come to touch my Prophets. And this is according to the Lords owne ſpeech to King *Abimelech*, concerning the wrong which he had done to *Abraham* in taking away his wife. To whom he ſpake thus, Gen. 20. 3. *Behold thou art but dead, becauſe of the woman which thou haſt taken, for ſhe is a mans wife.* And at the 6. verſe he ſaith, *I know that thou didſt this even with an upright minde, and I kept thee alſo, that thou ſhouldeſt not ſinne againſt me: therefore ſuffered I thee not to touch her. Now then deliver the man his wife againe, for he is a Prophet, and he ſhall pray for thee that thou mayeſt live; but if thou deliver her not againe, be ſure that thou ſhalt die the death; thou and all that thou haſt:* Yet they to anger the Lord ſtill more, proceeded thus farre: That what neither the King himſelfe, nor the civill Magiſtrate would doe, as being utterly againſt their conſciences, knowing the innocencie of *Ieremie*, or becauſe they had no law for it, *Paſhur* the Prieſt attempts againſt the Prophet of the Lord, to wit, to ſmite and to impriſon him. Even he, who of all other ſhould moſt have tendred the Prophet of God, and have ſheltered him to his uttermoſt power againſt all violence. He who ought not only to have countenanced, but alſo to have maintained him, and to have enjoyned the juſt denunciation of the vengeance of the Lord againſt the ſinnes of the land; becauſe he was the governour in the houſe of the Lord. This man (I ſay) notwithſtanding ſmites *Ieremie*, puts him in the priſon in the high gate of *Benjamin*, hard by the Temple. And then indeed at length after *Paſhur* had thus begun, (through the continuall inſtigation of the Prieſts and falſe Prophets, the Princes and Rulers themſelves, even ſome of them who had before ſpoken worthily in his behalfe, and had delivered him from the violence of the Prieſts) ſome of them ſmite *Ieremie* and caſt him into priſon againe. They are made inſtruments alſo to be moſt important with King *Zedekiah*, to let him to be put to death, but almoſt hard before their utter overthrow. Through which importunate ſuit of theirs, the King yeelds (though ſore againſt his conſcience)

Gen. 20. Verſ. 3. Verſ. 6.

Verſ. 7.

Ierem. 26. 19.

Ierem. 20. 1, 2. Paſhur the Prieſt attempts to ſmite and to impriſon *Ieremie.*

Ierem. 26. 11.

Ierem. 26. 17. 24. Jerem. 37. 15. The Princes ſmite and impriſon *Ieremie*, and labour the King to put him to death.

conſcience) to leave him into their hands, to doe with him what they would: for his conſcience told him, that *Ieremie* was a holy man and a true Prophet of the Lord. And this may ſeeme to appeare moſt evidently in three points. Firſt, for that the King himſelfe at his entrance unto his crowne, had ſent unto him to pray for him and his people, though neither he nor his ſervants would obey the word of the Lord delivered by him. Secondly, it is moſt apparant, in that the King uſed not only to ſend to inquire the word of the Lord of him ſecretly by others; but alſo to ſend for him privately to inquire of him himſelfe. And laſtly, his very anſwer to the Princes, when they deſired that he would ſuffer him to be put to death, imports manifeſtly, as I take it, that he did it againſt his conſcience; ſaying, *Behold he is in your hands, for the King can denie you nothing:* intimating thereby that he could eaſier have granted unto them any other matter, to have gratified them, than to have left *Ieremie* into their hands. Whereupon they proceeded to put him into a deepe dungeon, where was nothing but mire, in which he ſtacke faſt, there to ſtarve him in that loathſome miſerie, which was worſe than preſent death by many degrees. And why did they all this? What evill had poore *Ieremie* done, thus to incenſe the Rulers and all ſorts? Surely it was (as we heard) only for his zeale for Gods glorie, his faithfulneſſe in his miniſterie, his care to ſave the people and Church of God, and to turne away or to mitigate the vengeance now at the doores; and that principally by endevouring to turne them from their evill wayes, by diſcovering their ſinnes and the judgements due unto them. *He cryed out of their wrongs, and proclaimed deſolation for the ſame,* as God had commanded him. He would be no companion of the wicked, he could take no delight in their companies, as others did; but he choſe rather to ſit all alone, mourning becauſe of the anger of the Lord, and the plagues which he foreſaw. And moreover, his griefe was hereby more increaſed, that the people generally remained ſo ſenſleſſe in their extremeſt perils: and alſo ſo malicious againſt him, when his love and care was ſo vehement for them. Hence he makes ſuch bitter complaints unto the Lord, as was ſhewed before. How it had beene his continuall practiſe to make prayer for them. And thus had he remained ſo long

mourning,

Ierem. 38. 4. The King againſt his conſcience gives *Ieremie* into their hands, as is apparant in three things.

Ier. 37. 1. to 7.

Ierem. 38. 5. *Verſ.* 6.

Cauſe of all *Ieremies* troubles.

Ierem. 20. 7.

Ierem. 15. 16, 17. *Ierem.* 18. 20.

mourning, crying and intreating the Lord for them (as *Samuel* did for *Saul*) untill the Lord forbade him utterly to pray for them any more; becauſe he was reſolute not to ſpare them any longer, for theſe and all other their abominations. 1 *Sam.* 16. *Jer.* 7. 16. 11. 14. 14. 11.

Vengeance.] The ſpeciall denunciation of vengeance for this ſinne, chiefly againſt *Paſhur*, who had firſt ſmitten and impriſoned *Ieremie* was this, *That his name ſhould be called Magor Miſſabib, or feare round about.* As it came to paſſe in the Captivitie when he was made a terrour to himſelfe, and to all his friends. But this was ſhewed before Abom. 5. in the threatning againſt the crueltie of the Prieſts.

Abomination 14.

Murdering the ſervants of the Lord, bringing the Captivitie.

FInally to come to that which is the laſt and higheſt top of all their crueltie towards the true Prophets and ſervants of the Lord. The falſe-Prophets and wicked Prieſts, proceeded ſo farre in their outrage againſt Gods faithfull ſervants, as that (beſides the bloud which was ſhed in the dayes of *Manaſſes*, who filled Ieruſalem with innocent bloud, and therefore the Lord would not pardon it, as the Holy Ghoſt ſheweth) they came in the end to ſhed the bloud of the juſt, to wit, of ſome others of his deare and faithfull ſervants. This ſinne *Ieremie* bewailing in the Lamentations, makes it (as it were) the verie bringer in of the bloudie enemie, beyond all that ever man could have thought. For thus he laments: *The Kings of the earth and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have beleeved that the adverſarie and the enemie ſhould have entred into the gates of Ieruſalem.* Then gives the reaſon how it came to paſſe contrarie to all mens expectation, which was this: *for the ſinnes of her Prophets, and the iniquities of her Prieſts, who ſhed the bloud of the juſt in the midſt of her.* Therefore in the captivitie, *they wandred as blinde men in the ſtreets, and were ſo polluted with bloud, that the* [*enemie*] *would not touch their garments.* They had then bloud

The eighth degree, the ſhedding the bloud of the Prophets of the Lord. 2 *King.* 24. 4. Beſides that in the dayes of *Manaſſes.*

Lam. 4. 13. Some other immediately before the Captivitie. *Verſ.* 12. *Verſ.* 13. The ſhedding the bloud of Gods ſervants brings the Captivitie principally. *Verſ.* 14.

What that bloud was that brought the Captivitie.

bloud enough. Though I remember not that I reade of any moe of Gods Prophets or servants, whose bloud was shed, after those bloudy daies of *Manasses*, except only of one *Vriah* a Prophet, who was slaine by *Iehoiakim* the sonne of *Iosiah*, at that time when *Ieremie* had beene put to death, by the violence of the Priests and people, if God had not graciously raised up some of the worthie rulers to speake for him, and to procure his deliverance. Neither is it likely, that there was any more of the bloud of Gods servants spilt but only his: for that if there had beene any other, it had beene almost impossible, or at least most unlikely, that *Ieremie* should so have escaped, prophecying so openly as it seemeth untill the very time of the last besieging of the Citie. Neither could he have beene in that favour with the King, to be so sent unto by him, nor with the other rulers; nor yet that he of all others should have been so provided for, by the appointment of the King, to have everie day an allowance of bread in the siege, so long as there was any bread left in all the Citie. Only this seemeth to have beene all the bloud that was shed. First, that in *Manasses* dayes and before his time, as the bloud of *Zacharias* mentioned by our Saviour, and it may be of some others; and secondly this bloud of *Vriah* the Prophet. And withall the wrongs done to the Prophets, and the oppressions of them; whereof we have heard in part, as the loathsome imprisoning and pining of *Ieremie* in the filthie dungeon, farre worse than many deaths. Above all, that they did so maliciously thirst after the bloud of Gods servants, as we saw in that labour to put *Ieremie* to death. And also in that he had certainly died for it, if at one time God had not delivered him by that good noble man *Ahikam*, at another time by that worthie *Eunuch Ebedmelech* the black-moore, another time also, both he and *Baruch* had drunken of the same cup together, if God had not strangely hid them from their violence. And lastly, if the Lord had not inclined the heart of King *Zedekiah* towards him, to favour him continually, he could never have escaped. So that this was the only mercie and power of the Lord that they proceeded no further, and that God so preserued the rest of his servants, seeing they were as bloudily minded against all the rest, as they were against *Vriah*.

Ier. 26.23.

Ier. 26.17,18,24.

2 *Chron.* 24.20, 21, 22.

Matth. 23.35.

2 *Chron.* 23.16.

Ierem. 38.6.

Ierem. 26.8.11. 24.38.4.36.26.

Ierem. 26.24. 38.7.

Ierem. 36.26.

Now

Now yet the crie of this bloud, and of that which had beene before, yea and was ſtill continually ſhed in their bloudy and murdering affections, did ſo aſcend to heaven crying from the earth, as the bloud of *Abel*, that it inforced the Lord to bring that moſt incredible and heavie plague upon them. All this the Holy Ghoſt hath ſhortly compriſed in the narration of the execution hereof, according to this viſion and forewarning. *How when the chiefe of the Prieſts and of the people treſpaſſed wonderfully, according to all the abominations of the heathen* (as we ſhall ſee more after) *and polluted the houſe of the Lord, which he had ſanctified in Ieruſalem: Then and for that cauſe the Lord God of their fathers, ſent unto them by his meſſengers, riſing early and ſending, for he had compaſſion on his people and on his habitation. But they mocked the meſſengers of God, and deſpiſed his words, and miſuſed his Prophets, untill the wrath of the Lord aroſe againſt his people, and untill there was no remedy:* that is, there was no remedie unleſſe he would have ſuffered himſelfe to have beene deſpiſed, and made no God, neither juſt nor true in his threatnings, none to feare nor regard him any more.

1. *Iohn.* 3. 15. How the cry of this bloud of Gods ſervants aſcended into heaven.

Lam. 4. 12, 13.

2. *Chro.* 36. 14, 15.

The ſumme of all.

Verſ. 15.

Verſ. 16.

Vengeance.] Then followeth the vengeance ſet downe by the Lord in that place. How upon this miſuſing of his Prophets, when there was no more remedy, *He brought upon them the king of the Caldeans, to wit the Babylonian, who ſlew their yong men with the ſword in the houſe of their Sanctuary*; that is, in that houſe which they had ſo abuſed, *and he ſpared neither young man nor virgin, ancient nor aged, God gave all into his hand. And the veſſels of the houſe of God great and ſmall, and the treaſures of the King and of his Princes, all theſe carried he into Babel. And they burnt the houſe of God, and brake downe the wall of Ieruſalem, and burnt up the palaces thereof with fire, and all the precious veſſels thereof to deſtroy all. Alſo thoſe who were left by the ſword caried he away to Babel, and they were ſervants to him and to his ſonnes untill the kingdome of the Perſians had rule. To fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Ieremie, untill the land had her full of Sabbaths, for all the daies that ſhe lay deſolate ſhe kept Sabbath to fulfill ſeventy yeares, &c.* But concerning this plague and the grievouſneſſe of it, we ſhall ſee it after in particular, to have beene ſuch as is able to make the proudeſt deſpiſer of God to trem-

Vengeance for abuſing the houſe and ſervants of the Lord.

2. *Chron.* 36. 17.

Verſ. 19.

Verſ. 20.

The grievouſneſſe of the plague followeth in the particular execution when no-

thing else could serve. Conclusion with some application.

tremble, and the most flinty heart to bleed, when we shall lay sinnes and plagues together.

Thus have we seene some of the most generall and principall abominations of the wicked Priests and Prophets, and also the sinnes of all sorts against the true Prophets, but especially the outrage of the Priests against them, and how from them wickednesse did flow into all the land: first in that the people gave an applause unto them delighting in such men only; and thereby proceeded from step to step, untill they came to this height of iniquity against all the faithfull servants of the Lord. And consequently, how they came thereby so generally at length, to despise the word of the Lord and all holy profession of his religion, and gave themselves over to commit al these and many other abominations, as if they had beene no sins, untill this terrible vengeance of the Lord did overtake them, and that there was no remedie, but that he was even inforced thereunto.

Now it remaineth that we come to the particular abominations of the people which flowed from this sinke of despising Gods true and faithfull Prophets, and of this approving the most wicked and ungodly.

Here to make a stand and consider,

1

How good it had beene for all to have beene awaked at the admonitions of the true Prophets.

Yet here to make a stand a little, before we proceed to lay open the particulars. Let us all but thinke with our selves; How happy a thing it had beene for these Priests and Prophets, and all the Church of God then, if they had in time bethought themselves, trying and judging their waies by the word of the Lord. Or if these Priests could have beene awaked at the admonitions of the true Prophets; that they might never have beene thus given up, nor yet have brought the people of God to this height of impiety and cruelty against his dearest servants.

2

How necessary to stop such evils in the beginning.

And secondly let us bethinke our selves, how necessary it is for any Church beginning to grow secure, through long prosperity, to looke to it selfe in time, and to stop the course of such evils at the very head if it be possible. More specially such a people, as have beene so oft neere such a heavy destruction, as we have beene so warned in such a manner so many a time, and above all in the powder desolation. Surely that warning was not without just cause. The Lord is not become unrighteous, to threaten so to destroy a righteous nation without any pitty.

Thirdly.

Thirdly, this is well worthy our beſt meditation, and God would not that we ſhould lightly paſſe it over: That thoſe Prophets howſoever they were accounted of as vile perſons, yet were the faithfulleſt ſervants of God in all the land, and ſuch as walked moſt holily in all his Covenant and Commandements, and therefore were in moſt high favour with his majeſty; whereby they had beene both by their praiers and perſons the very chariots and horſemen of *Iſrael*, the means of their ſo long preſervation from the vengeance denounced againſt them; and were now alſo alone for the ſalvation of all who had grace to be awaked and warned by their miniſtery. Thus ſhould the whole land have taken notice of them, and thus have eſteemed of them, as the meſſengers of the Lord of hoſts, moſt deare and precious unto him.

3 How theſe who were ſo vilely accounted of were the deareſt ſervants of God, and the chiefe meanes to ſtay his wrath.

Fourthly, the Lord would have us to ſee, that as he had ſo ſtraightly charged his people concerning his Prophets that they ſhould not touch them (as we ſaw before) ſo he could not of all other ſinnes endure the wronging of his meſſengers, ſent unto them in the infinite riches of his mercie and compaſſion that he might ſpare them. That if king *Dauid* could not beare the diſgrace of his meſſengers, ſent in kindneſſe to the King of *Ammon*, but exerciſed the extremeſt ſeveritie that ever we read of in revenge upon the *Ammonites* for the ſame, though moſt of the people had no hand in it; much leſſe then could he who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords (moſt jealous of his glory, and moſt tender of his meſſengers ſent in ſuch abundant compaſſion) ever endure ſo horrible indignities done vnto his owne moſt faithfull Embaſſadors.

4 How of all other ſins God can leaſt endure the wronging of theſe.
Pſal. 105. 15.
2. *Chro.* 36. 16, 17.
Lam. 4. 13.
2. *Sam.* 10. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
2. *Chro.* 19. to 6. & 20. 1, 2, 3.

Fifthly, this alſo ought to be laid to heart, that from that publike diſgracing and ſhaming of theſe holy Prophets and worthy ſervants of the Lord, did flow ſuch ſtreames of impietie and all abominations to anger the Lord to the uttermoſt, to ruinate both Church and Common-wealth, and to bring upon them the enemies to the utter deſolation thereof.

5 How from the diſgracing Gods ſervants all impietie flowed.

Laſtly, theſe things being ſo, all muſt needs acknowledge, how happy it is for a Church and Nation, that would remaine the Church and people of the Lord and under his protection, of all other ſinnes to feare and to preuent thoſe, which are com-

6 What wiſdome it is to feare and pre-

vent all indignities against Gods messengers.

committed against his messengers and speciall servants; because they are done more directly against his Majestie, and so doe more provoke him. And therefore to stay them at the very beginning if it be possible; and so with them the plagues waiting upon them, that they rush not downe to overwhelme all of a sudden.

Application.] First of all, to omit all former times: that in the bloudy daies of Queene *Mary* our nation hath beene as fearefully defiled by all these degrees of iniquitie by the wicked Priests and false Prophets, and by the approbation of them, as also by all despight and cruelty against Gods true servants, all the world knoweth, and our Acts and monuments shall ever keepe record.

Application. That our nation hath beene as fearefully defiled with the bloud of Gods servants in the daies of Queene *Mary*, as Ierusalem in the time of *Manasses.*

Secondly, that our land is not yet purged of that bloud (as was touched before) seemeth most apparant, both by the violent rage of all those who have tasted of the cup of the whore of *Babylon* (I meane who are popishly affected) and their unsatiable desire to revive that cursed Idolatrie and cruell tyranny, and to bring upon us those bloudy daies againe. Also for that there is no more sense in us, of the anger of the Lord, which may still hang over us most justly even for those daies, nor any more feare of the returne of them againe; which notwithstanding Sathan is by all his instruments busily plotting day and night. And chiefly because there is not amongst us any greater detestation of that execrable and bloud-thirstie religion, so laid naked unto us both then, and before, and many a time since, and above al in that unnaturall slaughter-house prepared for us; as also since in that so horrible a murder of the late French King, seeking therein as it may seeme to cause that whole land to flow againe with the bloud of Gods Saints. Yea for that in stead of the true detestation of it, so many amongst us, as namely most or rather all who are Iesuitically affected, doe rather detest our covenant of our conscionable obedience to our gracious God and his word in all things, and doe so doat after that Idolatrie and furious cruelties againe, wishing (as we have just cause to judge both by their positions and practises) that all who unfainedly feare the Lord, might be so dispatched as those his servants were then. How farre we have proceeded in this sinne to anger the Lord,

That our nation hath beene as fearefully defiled with the bloud of Gods servants in the daies of Queene *Mary*, as Ierusalem in the time of *Manasses.*
Apparant that it is not yet purged.
By the thirsting of the popish sort to revive the Idolatry of those daies.
That we have no more sense thereof, nor of Gods anger kindled for it.
Nor any more detestation of that bloudy religion.

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he calls upon each of us to conſider wiſely by a carefull ſearch, and to ſtay our ſelves in time before the decree come forth. If we deſire to eſcape his ſearch, which otherwiſe, when no warning will ſerve, we are as ſure to finde in one dreadfull kinde or other, as ever did Ieruſalem: if ſo that the Lord be ſtill the ſame moſt holy and glorous God, and his word and threatnings ever true. That bloud-thirſtie Babylonian but watcheth for the day to be the Lords examiner, and trier of us (as was ſhewed before) though they know not ſo much. Lord inable us wiſely to ſearch and examine our ſelves in time, to eſape thy terrible examination, and by all theſe to underſtand at length, what need we have to watch and to pray.

God calls upon us to ſearch out this ſinne if we will eſcape his ſearch and the ſearch of the bloudy enemy.

Abomination 15.

Of the generall unfruitfulneſſe of the Lords vineyard amongſt them of Iudah, and how in ſtead of good grapes it brought forth wilde grapes, to cauſe him to lay it waſte.

HAving ſeene the principall ſinnes which concerned the Prieſts and Prophets, and the carriage of the people towards them; we are now to deſcend more particularly, to ſee the fruits which ſprang hereupon to increaſe the Lords wrath and indignation to make them deſolate.

The ſins ſpringing from the abuſe of Gods true Prophets.

Covenant.] Whereas the Lord had done theſe things for them: He had taken them to be his peculiar people of all the earth, plucking them out of the iron furnace. Yea he had (as he ſaith) pittie on them even then when they were caſt out, and none regarded to have the leaſt compaſſion of them, being polluted in their bloud. He then tooke them into ſo neere a league with himſelfe, as to be his inheritance. He gave them his Covenant, and the ſeales of it, his word and Sacraments, his lawes, ordinances and ſtatutes. He planted them in *Canaan* the garden of the earth, having caſt forth the inhabitants, and ſet them in their places. He had uſed all meanes of promiſes, threatnings, mercies and judgements, to make them obedient unto

Covenant and ground of it. *Exod.* 20.4,5,6. *Ezek.* 16. 8. Let us remember what God hath done for us above other people.

Pſal. 44. 2. & 80. 8. *Deut.* 4. 6.

Pſal. 105. 45.
2 *Chron.* 36. 15.

unto him, and to rie them to his lawes. He had moreover ſent his ſervants early and late, to take all poſſible paines with them, by teaching, warning, admoniſhing, and exhorting them; and had ſo fenced them about, and ſo delivered them, as neuer any other nation the like. So that they alone ſhould have beene the

Deut. 4. 6.
Exod. 24. 3.
Ezek. 16. 8.

underſtanding and holy people of all the world, that amongſt them he might have received the fruits of his labours. This Covenant had they for their parts entered into with him, this he looked for at their hands, but this they tranſgreſſed moſt fearfully.

Tranſgreſſiõ. Behold the Lords complaint, and tremble. *Gen.* 6. 6.

Tranſgreſſion.] But the Lord complaines of them, that they contrarily were become moſt unthankfull, moſt unholy and diſobedient, to bring forth none but moſt bitter fruits, to grieve his ſpirit thereby, to cauſe him to repent that ever he had done ſo for them, like as he repented for the old world before the floud. This intolerable unthankfulneſſe of theirs, the Prophet *Eſay* laments, in the ſong of the Lord to his vineyard, thus complaining: *That he had planted his vineyard in a moſt fruitfull hill, he had hedged it about, gathered out the ſtones, planted it with the beſt plants, built a tower in the midſt of it, made a winepreſſe, and done moreover whatſoever he could for his vineyard. Then he looked it ſhould bring forth grapes, good grapes,* to wit, all manner of obedience and holineſſe, *but loe it brought forth wilde grapes,* all diſobedience and impietie. *He looked for judgment and righteouſneſſe,* as the chiefe and moſt pleaſant fruits of his religion and of his care for them: *but behold* in ſtead of judging, releeving and ſuccouring the poore, the widow and the fatherleſſe, he found the *oppreſſion* of them; in ſtead of *righteouſneſſe,* he found *a crie,* a crie of their ſins, the cries and ſighes of the poore which were oppreſſed, and daily complaints of moſt outragious wickedneſſe in every eſtate and degree. Our Saviour ſeemeth evidently to allude hereunto in the parable of the vineyard let forth to the husbandmen, who in ſtead of rendring the fruits thereof, dealt cruelly with his ſervants, which he ſent unto them: like as we heard of their dealings towards the true Prophets, and even as their ſucceſſors did in his time with himſelfe and his diſciples. Howſoever it was, they did not bring forth the true and naturall fruits of his vineyard, as the fruits of knowledge, obedience, and the

Eſay 5. 1, 2, 3. Which of theſe hath not the Lord done for us? *Verſ.* 4.

Ver. 7. What the Lord lookes for of his vineyard.

Mat. 21. 33.

Verſ. 34, 35.

Mat. 21. 43.

feare

feare of the Lord, thoſe ſweet fruits of the Spirit mentioned *Gal.* 5. But cleane contrarily to anger him, they (eſpecially all the chiefe of them, of whom he moſt complaines, and in whom the diſpoſition of al the reſt appeares) brought forth the *grapes of Sodome*: all kind of pride, fulneſſe of bread, with abundance of idleneſſe, and none there was to ſtrengthen the hand of the poore, or any way to comfort or regard them as they ſhould. For ſo ſaith the Lord of them, that they *had juſtified Sodome* in this behalfe. Whence the Prophet *Micah* complaines at the ſame time in the perſon of the Church, That *ſhe was as the ſummer gatherings or as the grapes after the vintage, not a grape almoſt left*, but here and there one, no bunch at all; ſcarce any true faith or godlineſſe to be found, hardly a good and a righteous man left amongſt them: *Theſe were periſhed from the earth*; and ſo ſheweth how from the higheſt to the loweſt in every eſtate, *the beſt were as a brier, and the moſt righteous as a thorny hedge*: the poore man who had any dealings with them, ſhould hardly eſcape from them and not be ſcratched, yea, the Prophet complaines that this wickednеſſe was ſo generall that a man could *not truſt his friend*, no not his moſt inward friend, nor *her that lay in his boſome. The ſonne was againſt his father, the daughter againſt the mother, they of a mans owne houſe were his enemies*, who of all other ſhould have beene moſt friendly and firme. The principall drift of the Prophet is to ſhew; that every one was moſt malicious againſt them who feared the Lord, making any ſound conſcience of his commandements; and thoſe eſpecially which dwelt in their owne houſes; as we ſaw in part before, and ſhall ſee more fully after. For otherwiſe in iniquitie they agreed well enough; there was therein a confederacie amongſt them. But this enmitie was for the Lord, and his religion; as our Saviour alluding to this place moſt plainly declareth; That it was then ſo, and ſhould be that they ſhould be hated of all men for his names ſake. And thereupon it is that the Prophet ſheweth what he would doe in thoſe deſperate evill times. *He would looke to the Lord, he would flie to him, as to his onely refuge, he would thus wait for his God, and he would heare him.* Though there was not a man left in the earth, that would heare or regard him, yet the Lord would. So that theſe were the fruits of his vineyard; ſcarcely

Gal. 5. 22, 23.
Their grapes were the grapes of Sodome.
2. *Chron.* 36. 14.
Eſay 1. 10.
Ezek. 16. 49, 50, 51, 52, 53.
Deut. 32. 32.
Mic. 7. 1.
Verſ. 2.

Scarce any true godlineſſe, *viz.* men truly ſincere to be found amongſt them.
Verſ. 4.

Mic. 7. 5.
Ier. 15. 16, 17. & 20. 8, 9.
Eſay 8. 18.
Mic. 3. 2.
Eſay 8. 12.
Mat. 10. 34, 35. & 10. 7.
Mic. 7. 7.
What the Church is to doe in times deſperatly evil.

ſcarcely a *man* indeed, in regard of the reſt; hardly any true faith or godlineſſe to be found, but as it was in the daies of *Noah* and of *Lot*, and muſt be when our Saviour ſhall come, ſcarce faith found in the earth, in compariſon of the over-ſpreading of all iniquitie, and of the troopes of the wicked and ungodly.

Threatning. *Eſay* 5. 5. Behold the righteous vengeance for the unfruitfulneſſe of the Lords vineyard.

Vengeance.] The Lord denounceth for this, this heavie vengeance, as moſt righteous for ſo ſtrange unfruitfulneſſe: *That he would take away the hedge of his vineyard, that it might be eaten up, he would breake downe the wall of it, that it might be trodden downe, he would lay it waſte, and never take more paines with it. He would command the clouds that they ſhould not raine upon it.* The meaning is, that he would utterly ſtrip them of his publike worſhip, his faithfull Prophets, with all the principall meanes of their ſalvation, and of whatſoever elſe he had given them, either for honour or dignitie above other people. Finally, that he would take from them all meanes of protection and ſafety, which he had vouchſafed them, whether by their civill or eccleſiaſticall government: He would leave them to be made a deriſion and a prey to their enemies round about, as it came to paſſe in the Captivitie. And alſo as our Saviour ſeemes to apply that ſpeech to his time, *That he would cruelly deſtroy thoſe husbandmen, take the kingdome of God from them, and give it unto a nation which would bring forth the fruit of it*; as after he moſt fully and terribly accompliſhed.

Math. 21. 43.

The application hereof may make us all to ſhiver.

Application.] The application of this to our ſelves may cauſe every one of us to ſhiver, for feare of the ſame denunciation, and deſolation to light upon us.

Who knoweth not that the Lord did take us to himſelfe, as a vine out of Ægypt: I meane that he fetched us out of that Romiſh bondage, by a moſt high hand and notable overthrow of our oppreſſors; ſetting us in our habitation and renewing his covenant with us; as he did *Iſrael* from *Ægypt*, planting them in *Canaan?* And who can deny but the ſame our holy God, as he hath made this our nation his vineyard, ſo he hath planted us with the beſt plants, and uſed as many and gracious meanes (ſo farre as I am able to conceive) to make us fruitful in all obedience and good works, as ever he uſed for them. And ſo much more as the Goſpel exceedeth the law in glory, and the miniſtery

miniſterie thereof is more powerfull. So that he may truly demand concerning us, what could he have done for us, which he hath not done? But alas, what fruits have we brought forth generally! The Lords appeale to everie ones conſcience will ſoone convince us, that we ſhall be ſpeechleſſe. Yet for thoſe whoſe conſciences are as it were ſeared and utterly without ſenſe, and therefore thinke that there can be no ſuch wrath or threatnings againſt us, becauſe we are ſo fruitfull; like as they ſaid in *Ieremies* time: *Becauſe I am guiltleſſe, ſurely his wrath ſhall paſſe from me.* And as it is in *Micah, The Lord is among us, therefore no evill can come unto us.* And likewiſe for all of us, who flattering our ſelves in our owne hearts, ſay one to another, as *Saul* to *Samuel, Bleſſed art thou of the Lord, I have fulfilled the will of the Lord.* If the Lord ſhall aske as *Samuel* did of *Saul, what meaneth then the bleating and lowing of the ſheepe and oxen?* what meane the loud outcries of the idolatrous and bloudie enemies, that would by this principall argument, prove that neither we nor our religion can be of God, for the unfruitfulneſſe of our religion, and the wickedneſſe of the lives of many of the profeſſors of it, when they exclaime thus, Looke to their lives! What good works ſhall you finde amongſt them? Hence they thinke it not only lawfull, but alſo meritorious, to execute their butcheries upon us. Although (themſelves being Iudges) this can be no good reaſon againſt our religion; for by the very ſame reaſon it might as well be proved, that this was not the religion of God, which was profeſſed amongſt this people, no not in the dayes of good *Hezekiah* or holy *Ioſiah*, becauſe of theſe notorious abominations. All theſe indeed ſhewed, that they were polluted, and threatned this vengeance, but yet did not make them to be no Church, nor argue their religion not to be the pure religion and truth of God. For that it being his word, abideth the ſame for ever, howſoever it be uſed or abuſed. And ſecondly, who might ever worſe ſpeake againſt our evill fruits, than they from whom we have received them? All our grapes of Sodome, or certainly moſt of them, are of their planting, who every way farre exceed us therein, as we have partly ſeene before, and ſhall ſee more after. And yet we can never excuſe our ſelves, but that this complaint

Better it is to yeeld to his appeale, than to feele his revenging hand, executing his threatnings. *Jerem.* 2. 35. *Mic.* 3. 11.

1 *Sam.* 15. 13, 14.

The Papiſts principall argument and loud exclamation againſt us.

is too juſt, and therfore menaceth us with vengeance every houre.

But to leave the outcries of the malicious enemie, what meane the complaints and mournings of the godly, at leaſt in many parts, eſpecially of ſo many holy Miniſters, who are of *Micahs* ſpirit, even for this verie unfruitfulneſſe; bewailing it, that their people in whom they have any true comfort in their Congregations, are as the ſummer gatherings, or the grapes after the vintage, hardly a man or two after much planting and pruning, toiling and weariſomneſſe? Whence have there beene, and are, ſo many cries and ſighs of the poore, aſcending to heaven, for wrongs and oppreſſions, in ſtead of mercie and judgement? whence have there beene and are ſtill, ſuch complaints of the horrible corruptions in every calling, as we ſhall ſee in the next ſection? And if theſe be our fruits in theſe daies of the Goſpell, how ſhould we looke to eſcape ſome grievous vengeance; either that the Lord muſt needs leave us to be eaten up, and to be trodden downe, or to ſome other worſe plague, unleſſe we begin at length to bring forth better fruits? But yet to come neerer unto us all; which of us can excuſe our ſelves? Have not every one of us juſt cauſe to hang downe our heads, acknowledging each for our ſelves, that we are the unfruitfull branches, cauſing the Lord ſo oft thus to threat to cut us all downe, as juſtly deſerving ſuch a judgement? Which of us can ſay, that we have brought forth our fruits in due ſeaſon; either as we have this high calling to be Chriſtians, or according to our ſeverall places and ſtandings? Either the fruit of true thankfulneſſe for the Goſpell with all other our bleſſings and great deliverances? or of fervent zeale to honour our good God in our places? Or of a holy indignation for the diſhonours done unto him and to his houſe? Or of diligence to doe that ſervice to his name and people according to our abilitie, wit and credit, which we might have done, if we had beene faithfull, or but ſtirred up our hearts thereunto? How few of us can ſay in truth, I being a Miniſter have endevoured as much as I have beene able, to have had the care of every ſoule of my Congregation in my heart continually, as *Paul* had of all the Churches? I have unfainedly laboured to be acquainted with the ſpirituall eſtate of each of my flocke, to bring every one of them to Chriſts ſheepfold, to ſeeke out every loſt

Ezech. 9.4. Complaints of the dreſſers of the vineyard. *Mic.*7.1,2.

Eſay 5. 7. Sighes of the poore witneſſing.

*Heb.*2.1,2,3,4.

Eſay 5. 5.

Vnfruitfulneſſe of the Miniſterie.

Bleſſed art thou who canſt ſay ſo in any holy ſtrife and contention, thou art a fit man to helpe to make interceſſion for us all.

2 *Cor.*11.28. *Prou.*27.23. *Ezech.*34.16.

loſt ſheepe. I have laboured to watch over every ſoule to my poore power, to admoniſh, exhort and comfort every one both day and night with teares; fearing leſt any one of them ſhould be deceived by the world, bewitched by Satan or Antichriſt, or any other ſeducers. I have beene carefull as *Iacob* to give up a good account for every ſoule unto my Lord and Saviour, who hath bought them ſo dearely with his owne bloud, and will therefore require a more ſtraight account of every lambe, than ever *Laban* did: and who hath given me ſuch charge, even as I love him, to *feed his lambes, to feed his ſheepe*, to feed his lambes, making the declaration of all my love to be in feeding, feeding, ever feeding? And where is he who can ſay, I have alwaies beene afraid, leſt I or any of mine ſhould by our ſcandalous lives give the leaſt offence to any of my people, to hinder their love to Ieſus Chriſt, or their ſalvation any way? Finally, where is the man that can in any meaſure juſtifie himſelfe, that he hath not deſerved to be cut off from his people, and never ſuffered to ſpeake unto them any more; or to labour in Gods vineyard in planting, pruning or dreſſing it any longer, even for his owne unfruitfulneſſe, and much more for the unfruitfulneſſe of his people, through his owne defect and ſin in one kinde or other? May not the greateſt part of us, even of thoſe amongſt us, who have made the faireſt ſhew, thus lament our idle and unprofitable time, in ſtead of juſtifying our ſelves: Woe is me poore wretch, I ſee no fruit at all, or very little of my Miniſterie and labours! I hardly know the man whom I can ſet forth, to ſay as before the Lord, This ſoule have I gained to a ſound love, and to a conſcionable obedience of the Goſpell of Chriſt. Although I have ſeene that the Lord hath ſo bleſſed the labours of ſome poore men deſpiſed in the world, as that they have brought their Congregations generally, to a holy ſubmiſſion and conformitie outwardly to the Goſpell, and ſundrie of them to very ſound knowledge for ſuch ſimple men, yea, to make a conſcience of their waies. And why might not I have ſeene the like bleſſing on my labours, but that either my care and endevour hath not beene as theirs, or my heart not ſo good, or not ſet thereunto as theirs have beene, but wholly to the world, to my eaſe, credit, riſing, pleaſures, and the like earthly vanities. And therefore for that cauſe

Luk. 15.4. *Acts* 20.20.31.

Gen. 31.39,40, 41. *Acts* 20.28. 1 *Pet.* 5.2,3,4. *Ioh.* 21.15,16, 17.

1 *Theſſ.* 2.10,11. 2 *Cor.* 11.29.

How we may juſtly lament our negligence and time miſ-ſpent.

cauſe and all other my ſinnes, the Lord hath not ſuffered any of his heavenly dew to fall upon my labours. Hereby it is that I have beene ſo unprofitable. Yea moreover my covetous, proud and evill life, have made not only mine owne people, but many others alſo to be more unfruitfull and fit to be hewen downe. Some having gone away to Browniſme, others to Poperie, or at leaſt might have done for me, multitudes turned after the world, all faſt aſleepe through my ſinne. It is I therefore that am this unfruitfull tree, which have thus alſo made all the ground barren about me: it is I that have deſerved to be hewen downe and caſt into the fire! I am a principall provoker of this wrath, that the Lord ſhould ſo threaten to leave us all to be thus eaten up and trodden downe. It is I vile wretch! The bloud of the ſoules of my people is openly upon the wings of my garments: all the world may ſee it, even all who have ſeene my negligence, and my unprofitableneſſe amongſt them. It is I that call for the wilde Boare from Rome to root up this vineyard. O happie man who thus condemning himſelfe can ſue for mercie, and now begin to ſeeke to make the Lords vineyard to become fruitfull.

Mat. 3.10.18.7.

Luke 13.7.

Ierem. 2.34,35.

Magiſtrates fruit.

Bleſſed are yee rulers to whom the Lord hath vouchſafed this mercie.

But to leave the miniſterie, and to come to our Magiſtrates: who among thoſe into whoſe hands the Lord hath put his ſword to execute his judgements, can ſay in a good conſcience; I have endevoured with all my power to bring forth my fruit; to execute Gods judgements as in his place, without partialitie, as well on great offenders as on ſmall. That mine eye ſhould ſpare none. All my ſtudie hath beene to promote his holy religion, and all true godlineſſe. I have uſed all my authoritie thereunto, to countenance the good, and to maintaine their juſt and honeſt cauſes, but to diſcountenance all iniquitie and vice. Oh happie rulers who can ſay thus in the uprightneſſe of their hearts as before the Lord! And many ſuch I doubt not but the Lord hath in the affection and deſire of their ſoules, and ſome in deed. But on the other ſide, how few can altogether free themſelves from that woſull accuſing and gnawing which will be in the conſciences and tongues of the moſt when they ſhall be awaked or ſtand before the great Tribunall; when as everie ſuch impenitent offender ſhall thus cry out, It is I, even I who

have

have beene the unfruitfull tree, and who have as much as lieth in me called for the axe of the Lords vengeance upon all: I indeed have holden the ſword, but never had grace once to conſider whoſe it was, nor to whom I was to yeeld it up and give my account for it. And hereupon I have executed mine owne judgements, I have followed mine owne heart; for the countenancing of Chriſt and his members, I have done nothing; but rather the very lewdeſt, who have beene common deſpiſers of him and all true godlineſſe, thoſe have beene countenanced by me; they have beene my companions. I have more looked at the time, than at the Lord. I have feared the faces of men, but not of my God. I have ſought to gratifie the people, becauſe I looked at the prey. Thus have I accepted the perſons of the great, when the cry of the poore hath ſcarcely come unto me. Generally my ſelfe have I reſpected, my honour and advancement, but ſeldome have I regarded the worke of the Lord as in his place; or him who ſpeakes thus, *I have ſayd you are Gods, but ſhall die like men.* This alacke is too manifeſt againſt me, by that continuall increaſe of all profaneneſſe and irreligiouſneſſe, even in the place where I live, in ſtead of true pietie: and for that I know not the man, whom I have countenanced as I ought, nor any way incouraged in the way of godlineſſe, but have rather ſcorned and jeſted at them, or elſe ſuffered them to be wronged and abuſed. It is I therefore that am ſuch a one, that am the provoker of the Lords fierce wrath, to lay his vineyard waſte, and a caller for of this deſolation.

The accuſation of the conſcience in the careleſſe Magiſtrate.

Pſal. 82. 6.

Finally, which of us can ſay as *Cornelius*, I being a maſter or governour of others, have feared God with all my houſhold, or have unfainedly endevoured the ſame, and to win every ſoule of them unto the Lord; I being a private man, have laboured to employ every talent beſtowed upon me, both of underſtanding, wealth, countenance, and all to the beſt; as I might moſt honour my God, and doe ſervice to his Church therewith? Or rather where is the man, I meane in regard of the multitude, that muſt not needs lay his hand upon his head, thus bewailing his unfruitfulneſſe? I having a family or charge, might have ſeene much knowledge of God and love of his truth amongſt them, with conſcience and obedience to Ieſus Chriſt, if I had beene

Acts 10. 2. The Governours fruit. Happie is th' man who ſtirreth hereunto. The private mans.

beene faithfull and carefull to have brought forth my fruit, to have inſtructed and warned them; whereas now I ſee none, no not a ſoule under me, at leaſt by my meanes. I might have gained much with my talents, if I had put them forth to the beſt. I have ſeene other poore men of farre meaner gifts than my ſelfe every way, yet what honour they have done to God, what ſervice to his Church; what ſoules they have gained; what good to their countries; whereas I have done little or nothing at all, with all my learning, wit, credit, wealth and whatſoever; and only becauſe my heart hath not beene as theirs, ſo ſet for the Lord, his glorie and kingdome, but wholly for my ſelfe and for the world. Hence have my talents lien hid; I have not only beene thus unfruitfull my ſelfe, but alſo have made all barren about me, by my ſtanding over-neere unto them, and my dropping upon them. It is I that have deſerved to be hewen downe. I have called for this axe of Gods vengeance. I was a principall, that cauſed us all to be ſo neere the hewing downe for my carnall Goſpelling.

If any thinke that this charge and accuſation will not lie upon him (as oft the greateſt offenders thinke themſelves moſt cleare) let ſuch beſides the confeſſion of holy *Daniel* and the Church in the captivitie, but remember that worthie ſervant of God and bleſſed martyr Mr. *Bradford*, when for the unfruitfulneſſe of this vineyard, the Lord had ſo taken away the hedge of it, and let in the wilde beaſts in the dayes of Queene *Marie*, and ſo let it be deſtroyed: How he (then in bonds for the teſtimonie of Ieſus, and readie to give up his life, ſentence being given on him;) acknowledgeth his owne juſt deſert of that judgement, yea though it had beene hell it ſelfe, for his owne unfruitfulneſſe. Reade his letters then written to Cambridge; to the profeſſors of Chriſts Goſpell in Lankaſhire and Cheſhire, and to the faithfull brethren at Safron Walden, with others, how he crieth out againſt his unfruitfulneſſe: how he acknowledgeth of himſelfe, that for his owne former hypocriſie, vaine-glorie, ſelfe-love, covetouſneſſe, idleneſſe, unthankfulneſſe, and carnall profeſſing Chriſts holy Goſpell, not living therein ſo lovingly, painfully and purely as he ought to have done, he had deſerved that; howſoever the enemies aimed not thereat, but

Dan. 9. 3, 4, 5, 6. *Pſal.* 106. 6. *Lam.* 8. 9. Mr. *Bradfords* complaint for his owne unfruitfulneſſe. Marke this well all you who are highly conceited of your ſelves; and thinke what you ſhall doe, if ever God permit thoſe dayes againe, or when your conſciences are awaked as his was then.

to

to deſtroy the truth of Chriſt, and Chriſt in him, yet he ſaw the Lord righteous in all. And doe wee thinke that that holy and painfull ſervant of God, was too ſhort of us, or not much before any of us, who now live in this ſecure age; both for painfulneſſe in his calling, for holineſſe and abundance of the bleſſing of the Lord upon his labours? No, no, all thoſe places to which he writ his letters, and the whole Land whereſoeuer hee came were witneſſes of his fruits in a moſt rare meaſure, compared with the beſt of ours. Let us therefore no longer with *Saul* proudly juſtifie our ſelves that wee have brought forth our fruits; but let each of us ſay with *Dauid*, I have ſinned againſt the Lord, it is even I that have ſinned: it is I that am one of theſe unfruitfull trees! If the Lord had cut me up from the land of the living, when the ſtroke of his axe was come to my very root, and nothing was betweene mee and death, but only the plucking backe of his hand in an inſtant, I had juſtly deſerved it! Let us franckly acknowledge, that if we had beene all hewen downe in one day, our vineyard laid waſte, the Kingdome given to them who would have brought forth the fruit of it, that the Lord had therein beene moſt righteous, and dealt with us according to our deſert. The beſt of us have had ſuch a fading, that we have hardly ſhewed either fruits or leaves of late time, in regard of that which wee have had ſometimes, or others of Gods deare ſervants have had. We have loſt our firſt love. The zeale of Gods houſe doth not touch us as in former dayes. Oh that our love to him were not quenched in a lamentable manner, in many places where it hath beene moſt fervent! That we were not too generally become as the Laodicean, lukewarme, and ſo our danger increaſed to be ſpued out! Where is our tender regard to our Lord and Saviour in his poore members, to feed him being hungrie, to give him drinke being thirſtie, to clothe him being naked, to viſit him in ſickneſſe, to come to him in priſon? Doe we not rather pamper our ſelves as againſt the day of ſlaughter, having fearefully loſt that tender care of Gods Church and people, and of the welfare thereof, which was in good *Nehemiah?* Have we not forgotten very generally the affliction of *Ioſeph?* The hatred, diſgrace, and want, wherein many of Gods deare Saints have long and doe ſtill liue? Are we

1 *Sam.* 15. 13.
2 *Sam.* 12. 13.
1 *Chro.* 21. 17.
Each of us to acknowledge particularly our unfruitfulneſſe.

Mat. 25. 34, 35, &c.

Eſay 22. 12, 13.
Neh. 1. 2, 3, 4, 5.

Prov.29.18. *Hoſ. 4.6.*

we not almoſt paſt any more feeling of the daily murders of innumerable poore ſoules, periſhing for lacke of inſtruction and warning? many by Poperie, multitudes by Atheiſme and profaneneſſe; a world by ignorance and ſecuritie. Beſides the manifeſt endangering of the bloud of ſo many of the tender lambes of Ieſus Chriſt, as have beene and are carried away into the wilderneſſe, and ſeparate by Satans cunning to deſtruction, ſo farre as he is able? Who hath lamented for them, crying unto the Lord, that all holy meanes might be uſed to fetch them home againe to the fold of their Lord and Saviour? Who layeth any more to heart the rending of Chriſts Church, the diviſions of his kingdome? Who hath beene truly humbled for the inſulting and triumphing of the bloudie enemie, as though our deſtruction were hereby haſting apace; their owne deadly wound thus cured againe? What can theſe things tell us, but that we are extremely unfruitfull, yea almoſt cleane dead and fit for the fire, neere to our utter cutting downe; all that heavie vengeance comming upon us, which he hath ſo oft threatned unto us, and which he did in this Captivitie bring upon Iudah?

Luke 20.16.

But we ſay ſtill as they, God forbid, yea and inſtantly day and night, let us ever ſo beſeech the Lord. But if we will indeed have the Lord to forbid it, and turne away our like deſtruction or a worſe, (as yet we may through his rich mercie, if we be not wanting to our ſelves) we muſt each begin to ſay henceforth and to vow it: Hereafter (God willing) I will endevour to bring forth fruit, mine owne fruit not only as I am a Chriſtian ingenerall, but that which belongeth to my place and calling, and in

Pſal. 1.3.

my due ſeaſon; to be as the tree planted by the rivers of water; That I may not only enjoy ſtill a roome in the vineyard of my God, and in the end be tranſplanted into the heavenly Paradiſe, but alſo that in the meane time I may be one of thoſe, upon whom the Lord may be moved in compaſſion to thinke in mercie to let his vineyard ſtill to tarrie with us; his ſervants to take paines amongſt us, his clouds to drop upon us, the hedge of his protection, both Prince and all other good meanes, to continue about us for the preſervation of us and of our poſteritie to the comming of his Sonne. Let this, oh Lord, be ever in the mouthes and hearts of all thy people, that thou mayſt ſtill ſpare

us and ſtill rejoyce over us to doe us good! Amen, Amen.

And thus much of the unfruitfulneſſe of the Lords vineyard, laying it waſte, and making it a deſolation; notwithſtanding all the good fruits which muſt needs be amongſt them, under thoſe good Kings, and the worthie reformations under that renowned *Hezekiah* and holy *Ioſiah*: which yet could not turne away this judgement. That we may not ſecure our ſelves in regard of thoſe fruits, which the Lord ſtill vouchſafes amongſt us, in his endleſſe compaſſion.

But now we are to deſcend more particularly, to ſhew how the Lords vineyard was not only unfruitfull, as he complaines, but how in ſtead of the good and pleaſant grapes which he expected, it brought forth moſt bitter grapes, yea beſides thoſe mentioned before, to provoke him yet further, and what thoſe grapes were.

Abomination 16.

Corruptions crept into all places and callings, pulling on the Captivitie.

Covenant.] Concerning the generall holineſſe and integritie of this people; they by their covenant being Gods owne people, ought to have beene the holieſt of all the world, and that not only their Prieſts, but even their people alſo: for he had to this end choſen them out of all other, to be to him *a royall Prieſthood and a holy nation. They were a thing hallowed, the firſt fruits of all the earth.* And therefore they ought to have beene all holy; conſecrated to his divine Majeſtie, as holineſſe it ſelfe: holy Princes, holy Rulers, holy Prieſts, holy people, holineſſe to have beene found in each place and calling, integritie and ſinceritie every where. Such Rulers and Officers had they alſo choſen and ſet over them by *Moſes* in the beginning, ſuch people were they ever in ſhew, when God humbled them, and ſome ſuch they retained to the very day of their miſerie as we heard before.

Gods people the holieſt people of all the world. *Exod.* 19. 3, 4, 5, 6. *Exod.* 28. 36, 38.

Exod. 18. 21. 25.

Tranſgreſſion.] Yet the Lord complaines of them; that cleane contrarily,

Tranſgreſſio.

Corruptions crept into all places and callings. *Esay* 1. 21.

contrarily, all estates and callings had extremely corrupted their wayes, both by injustice and all other evill dealings: and that they did daily grow worse and worse, untill that the Captivitie came. This the Spirit of the Lord lamented long before this wrath was accomplished, comparing those times then, with the former, and with their covenant, to wit, with that which they had promised unto the Lord to be. For thus he speaketh, bewailing their case long before by the Prophet *Esay*: *How is the faithfull Citie become an Harlot?* Meaning that Ierusalem which had promised unto him fidelitie, and all dutifull obedience, as unto her husband; and which formerly being but admonished from him of any fault, would straight-way blush and be ashamed, yea which was wont to humble her selfe, and seeke to pacifie him by repentance, to the end to enioy his favour and presence; shee was now altogether become disloyall and impudently wicked. She had now a harlots fore-head, that could not blush at his rebukes, for al her abominations, and shamelesly followed al her owne filthy lusts. Afterwards he laments for her in this, *That her silver was become drosse*, her wine was mixed with water; plainly signifying thereby, that whatsoeuer had formerly beene pure amongst them, as fined silver, and freest from any mixture, as most precious wine, was now wholly corrupt. And these corruptions were in all sorts, from the highest to the lowest, from the judgement seat, which should of all other places have beene freest from the least corruption, to the very meanest place and office in the land, as wil after appeare in the particular discourse: whence the Lord calleth them *corrupt children*, bemoning their case, *that from the sole of the foot unto the crowne of the head, there was no whole place*, for the very strokes whereby he had smitten them, for all these their corruptions and wickednesses, and yet they did not repent. Long after this time, euen fortie yeeres and more, in holy *Iosiahs* dayes, the Prophet *Zephany* he renewes this complaint, crying out, *Woe to her that is filthy* [or woe to the gorge or maw] *and to the polluted, woe to the robbing Citie*. In which words hee compares her for her totall corruption in every part, unto the maw of a fowle that gathereth up much filthinesse, with the nourishment, and so is full of filth. So was it with Ierusalem, as he sheweth there in particular. And

Verſ. 21. Ierusalem become an Harlot.

Her silver become drosse. *Verſ.* 22.

Her corruptions were spread thorow all. *Verſ.* 4.

From the foot to the head. *Verſ.* 6.

Zeph. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4.

ever

ever as the vengeance drew neerer, so waxed they stil worse and worse, untill they were become utterly *drosse; all brasse and tin, iron and lead*, as the Lord himselfe tels this our Prophet *Ezekiel*. presently before this refining and purging of them; for all religion and conscience towards the Lord, were cleane departed from all their dealings. All that which was done amongst them, was done for money, and other like worldly respects, wherein they retained any shew of holinesse or goodnesse, it was only in regard of their good lawes, and godly Princes, in hypocrisie, or in some like outward policie. That this was the generall state of Prophets, Priests, Rulers, Iudges, people, in all matters both Civill and Ecclesiasticall, all the former places and many other doe witnesse; and that money had corrupted and marred all. But for the places I shall have more fit occasion after to declare them at large, when we shall come to see their covetousnesse. Only a few (as was shewed) God had reserved of each sort, which were the pillers of the state so long as it stood, and left for the seede of the Church in the Captivitie. Otherwise they had beene made as *Sodome* and *Gomorrah* long before that time.

Ezek. 22. 18, 19. All drosse before the Captivitie, nothing left but shewes.

Esay 1. 23. *Mic.* 3. 4. *Ezek.* 22. 25, 26, 27.

Esay 1. 9. Only a few were reserved in every calling. *Esay* 6. 13.

Vengeance.] For the vengeance proportionable to these their corruptions and this mixture in every part; the Lord threatneth them both by the Prophet *Esay* long before, and by *Ezekiel* at the instant, that hee would gather all of them into the midst of Ierusalem, *as silver, brasse, iron, lead, tin, and there hee would melt them together as in a furnace, and so fine them and burne out their drosse*: and then they should know thereby, that the Lord had powred out his wrath upon them. And after that they were taught to know him by this affliction, then he would restore them Iudges and Counsellors, as at the beginning, that they might be called againe, a City of righteousnesse and a faithfull Citie. And thus it came to passe in all things, as the Lord had fore-told: their gathering into Ierusalem as into a furnace or fining pan, was fulfilled at the taking of it; their melting and fining, both then, and in the seventie yeeres Captivitie: their restoring as at the first in the dayes of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*.

The vengeance proportionall. *Ezek.* 22. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22. To melt them together in the midst of Ierusalem, as in a furnace. *Esay* 1. 25, 26. *Exod.* 18. 21, 25. To restore all as at the first. And so it was fulfilled.

Application.] Now to returne home unto our owne times, and to inquire whether this complaint be liable against us or no; whether

Application.

To try whether we have no need of such a melting. The Lord tooke us out of the iron furnace.

How neere we have beene unto the fiery furnace.

England could not have filled the furnace.

How speedily it would have executed the vengeance.

The furnace proclaimed to all people that we are corrupt.

And what God is about to doe unlesse we repent.

whether we have deserved, and indeed stand in need of any such a melting, with such a fining and furnace as they. Surely the Lord tooke us at our first comming out of Ægypt, even out of the iron furnace, and that by a deliverance, in all mans reason, as impossible as ever he tooke them. We also have promised as great fidelitie and holinesse to our Lord and Saviour (at least in our baptisme) as ever did they; witnesse moreover all our good lawes at the restoring of the Gospell and since that time. We have also beene since then, and as it were but yesterday, as neere unto the fierie furnace, as ever were they in Ierusalem, or any other people to escape. We had the furnace set visibly before all mens eyes, with so much and such kinde of fuell under it, as never the world heard of before, nor could ever have come into mans heart, but that the patterne was brought from that infernall furnace. We were all over it in effect, and even in the very middest of it: all the whole bodie of the land; yea all the Christian world we may truly say, all states and degrees of the true lovers of Christs Gospell. For England could not have filled it, neither could the flames of it have beene contained within our seas, but in the end, all that professed the name of Christ should have beene purified all alike. Nothing at all wanting, but the least sparke to kindle the fire, and it as neere as ever was, and not to be put unto it. If it had but once touched the fuell, it would have needed no blowing, nor have beene long in fining the principall part of us. It would have executed the Lords vengeance in a moment in the twinckling of an eye. Nothing in all the world stayed it, but the incomprehensible mercie and endlesse pitie of the Lords compassion, whose bowels earned over us to thinke of our destruction, and kept his hand between us and death. Now what did all this proclaime unto all people under heaven, to whom the report of it should ever come, as no doubt the sound of it is gone into all the world; but that his highnesse would have all to take notice, that wee are all, high and low, rich and poore, even all generally corrupt, our silver is become drosse, wee brasse and iron, and must needs be melted, have our drosse burned forth, and we purified in the furnace of affliction. Though he did then deferre it for that instant, to give us a longer time, and to trie if we would yet at length purifie

rifie our ſelves by repentance: yet he did thereby certainly aſſure us, what he muſt doe, and is determined, unleſſe wee prevent him. Surely we muſt needs thinke, that our righteous God can doe no iniquitie, and therefore did never threaten us ſo, without a moſt juſt cauſe. It is beſt therefore, if we would eſcape, to fall in hand ſpeedily with the trying and fining of our ſelves. To runne through every office and calling were infinite and needleſſe. The crie of the ſinnes of our Land, rings in our eares daily, and therefore much more in the eares of the Lord, (if it be true) of the grievous corruptions reigning every where; we cannot deny it. Let us but call to minde that one, it muſt needs convince us for all the reſt and cover our faces, if it be according to the crie, and as it was certainly in thoſe daies when Rome was amongſt us, I meane that thoſe Offices and Courts, which have beene of all other appointed for the purging of all our iniquities, and reforming the conſciences of Gods people, have beene many of them, ſo cried out of, as the very ſinkes of all iniquitie, and nouriſhers of all horrible impietie: when offenders have ſeene that money could buy out any thing: many being fed upon the ſinnes of the people; without any reformation of their conſciences, or regard of ſaving of their ſoules That for the very corruptions therein, as for the ſinnes of *Elies* ſonnes, ſome have abhorred the ſacrifices of the Lord; others incouraged to doe any evill, thinking that it is not to be regarded how wickedly men live, or how profanely ſoever, whether they ſerve God or no, money can ſerve for all. They may be Idolaters, live in adultery, continuall drunkenneſſe, or any other vice, money can buy out all. So for moſt other offices, preferments, places, callings, the crie increaſeth ſtill amongſt us too generally, as it was in Rome: *Quæ non venalia Romæ?* All goeth by favour, favour by money, and the heavieſt purſe commonly carrieth all away. How common this complaint is, all know; how true, it is good for us throughly to inquire, to prevent the Lords ſurvey. For mine owne ſelfe, in hearing, I ſigh and tremble, that herein we ſhould be ſo like to Ieruſalem before her fining. I leave it therefore to every mans owne ſoule to trie before ſuch a trying come, and each to redreſſe it, whom it concernes. It ſhall be happie for us in this and in all other to prevent

Gen. 18. 25.

1 *Cor.* 11. 31.

Our corruption inſtanced in the crie of many ſinnes. *Gen.* 18. 20, 21.

Let this, as the reſt, be inquired amongſt the moſt conſcionable and painfull Miniſters, concerning the truth of it.

vent the danger. This we are certaine of, let a man live never ſo privatly, if it were to be ſeparate from men, as *Ieremy* wiſhed, yet we cannot but heare this crie, unleſſe we would goe out of the world. And how much more then muſt it needs be in the eares of the Lord of Hoaſts? So that undoubtedly for theſe, we had all beene made as *Sodome*, as *Eſay* ſaith; and as Ieruſalem, England the furnace, we had ſurely beene melted, had not the Lord left us in every calling ſome, as *Abraham* and *Lot*, whom he hath thought on in mercie, and made them the preſervers of the reſt, and witneſſes againſt the corruptions by their integrity in this evill age.

Jerem. 9. 2.

Concluſion. That we never let this paſſe out of our hearts, how neere we have beene unto the melting. *Zeph.* 2. 1, 2. 1 *Cor.* 11. 31.

Well, to conclude this point, and yet a little further to preſſe it upon us, (if God may be pleaſed by it to worke on our hearts) Let us never ſuffer this to paſſe out of our ſoules: How neere we were unto the melting, how we are yet reſerved even miraculouſly, at the interceſſion of the Angell of the Covenant, and pluckt as a brand out of the burning, or as the metall out of the midſt of the furnace, and are like as certainly to be caſt in againe as ever people under heaven, unleſſe wee will purge our ſelves; though in what manner, the Lord himſelfe only knoweth. What danger we have beene in ſince, who knoweth not, every man may diſcerne. The Proclamation concerning the Papiſts, not long agoe declared; the French King is a picture. The neerer wee have beene, and the more pitie hee hath ſhewed, the more certainly and more terribly is it to be feared he will come upon us, and throw us into it of a ſudden. Oh pray, pray! Oh Nation not worthy to be loved, purge thy ſelfe from thy droſſe, that thou maiſt eſcape the fining of the Lord.

Abomination 17.

Hypocriſie angring the Lord, haſtening the Captivitie.

Covenant.] Concerning Gods worſhip, (that wee may come to it) and how they dealt with the Lord therein: This was the Covenant which they had entred into with his Maieſty; That as they ſhould have had and acknowledged him alone for their God, ſo in his worſhip they ſhould have worſhip-

worshipped him only, so as himselfe commanded, not after their owne fancies. And this they should have done, not so much in the outward ceremonie, as in Spirit and Truth; in obedience to the whole Morall Law; in knowing, fearing, beleeving and trusting in him; loving him with all their heart and all their soule, depending wholly upon him, so giving him their hearts and inward affections chiefly: and doing the outward worship unto him, especially as a meanes to stirre up and to declare the inward. This was the very summe of all, first, *to wash their hearts from their wickednesse. Then to doe justly, to loue mercy, to humble themselves, to walke with their God*, as the Prophet *Micah* sheweth.

Behold you true worshippers, and rejoyce you that are such.

Ierem. 4. 14.

Micah 6. 8.

Transgression.] But the Lord complaines of them, that they did grow to a generall hypocrisie: For howsoever through their holy lawes and good Princes, the substance of Gods worship did for most part remaine amongst them outwardly, chiefly under their good governours, and the very sincerities of it in the daies of *Iosiah*, untill that the Captivitie began; and although the people generally frequented the publike assemblies, and kept the observations and sacrifices according to the Law; yet all that which they did was but in hypocrisie, as the Lord chargeth them, for most of them looked only to the outward ceremonies and sacrifices, to observing of daies and rites, and keeping the service in the Temple, or other places of Gods worship, but never regarded the great and weighty commandement of keeping justice and judgement, like as our Saviour complaines of them for the same. Nay, they were most wicked in their wayes, and yet they thought that God must needs respect them for these their outward shewes of religion, that they were therefore safe and in case good enough, howsoever they lived, as will appeare plainly after.

Transgressiõ. Their hypocrisie wherein chiefly.

Esay 1. 11, 12. *Matth.* 23. 23. *Luke* 11. 42.

This the Lord complaines of by the Prophet *Esay*, saying, *That he was full of their burnt offerings, and was wearied with the multitude of their sacrifices. His soule hated all their observations and solemne assemblies, they were a burden unto him*; although all things there spoken generally, were such as were appointed by the Lord himselfe. And therefore hee threatneth them, that though they stretched out their hands, he would hide away his eyes, and although they made many prayers, yet he would not heare,

Esay 1. 11, 12, 15. *to* 21. *Vers.* 14. The outward service without the inward, is a wearisomnesse unto the Lord, and so the ceremonie without the moral commandement.

Vers. 15.
Vers. 16.

heare, for that their hands were full of bloud. Whence he biddeth them to *wash them, make them cleane, to cease to doe evill, to learne to doe well*; to declare their religion in these things, *seeking judgement, releeving the oppressed, judging the fatherlesse, defending the widow. And so consenting and obeying, they should eat the good things of the Land*; but otherwise, *refusing, they should be devoured with the sword (the mouth of the Lord had spoken it)* notwithstanding all their outward ceremoniall worship and shewes.

Vers. 17.
Vers. 19.

Ierem. 7. 8,9,10.

The very like hath the Prophet *Ieremie* in *Iosiahs* daies, as it may appeare; where hee thus expostulates the Lords quarrell with them, and sets before their faces their odious hypocrisie, telling them thus: *That they trusted in lying words which could not profit them*; to wit, *in the Temple of the Lord*, and the outward observations and services performed there; and said thus in their hearts, and in all their practises, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, and this is the Temple of the Lord.* Then he asketh them thus in the name of the Lord, saying, *Will you steale, murder, commit adultery, and sweare falsly, burne incense to Baal, and walke after other gods whom yee know not, and come and stand before me in this house, whereon my name is called, and say wee are delivered, though wee have done all these abominations. Is this house*, saith hee, *become a den of theeves? this house where my name is called upon amongst you.* After all this hee tels them thus much in effect; That the outward worship and *ceremonies* were not the *thing that he spake to their fathers for, or gave them commandement of, when he brought them out of the Land of Ægypt*; *but that they should obey his voice, and walke in all his waies, which he had commanded them, then hee would be their God, and they should be his people.* Though he required obedience to his owne ceremoniall commandement, yet nothing in regard of this. No though they should have offered unto him *thousands of rammes, and ten thousand rivers of oyle in sacrifice*, if so it had beene possible; all this was nothing to the obeying the voice of the Lord, and walking in humilitie with him in his morall Commandements.

To trust in outward observations, is to trust in lying words.

Ierem. 7. 4.
Vers. 9.
Vers. 10.

Vers. 12.

The outward ceremony is not indeed the thing the Lord commanded.

Vers. 23.

Mic. 6. 7.

Hypocrisie in observing traditions of men

Secondly, this kinde of hypocrisie the Lord complaines of among them; That besides his owne ceremoniall worship, they had

had a number of other superstitions, and those openly in superstitious times; secretly and in private under the best kings. Of these being but the traditions of men, they made the most conscience. For this sinne the Lord findes himselfe much grieved, charging them thus, That their feare towards him was taught according to the precepts of men. Such as were those Pharisaicall washings condemned by our Saviour, against which he applieth this speech of *Esay*: In vaine doe they worship me, teaching doctrines mens precepts: In these precepts of men was the principall part of their feare towards God.

more than Gods commandements.

Esay 29. 13.
Mat. 15. 2.
Marke 7. 1, to 6. &c.

Thirdly, this the Lord condemnes them for; That what they did in his worship, they did not from the heart with any feeling or sinceritie, but with their lips for a fashion only. For so the Lord chargeth them: Because this people commeth neere unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips, but have removed their hearts farre from me, and their feare towards me was taught by the precepts of men, therefore, Behold I will doe a marvellous worke amongst them, &c.

Hypocrisie in serving God by the commandements of men, and not of any conscience to God.
Esay 29. 13.

Threatning] As the Lord tels them by *Esay*, *that his soule hated all* this their worship and religion, *it was but a burden to him*; like as he had said by *Salomon*, That the sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination unto him. Therefore he bids them to *bring him no moe oblations*, he required no such service at their hands. He also threatneth that he would not heare their praiers, because they did not reforme their lives. So by *Ieremy* he likewise menaceth them to take away their very outward shewes of religion, which they so much bragged of, and to destroy the place where they had so played the hypocrites: That looke as he had dealt with Shilo, the place where he had set his publike worship at the beginning, so he would deale with Ierusalem, and with the Temple, to make them a desolation, as it came to passe. And finally, that then for all this their carnall worshipping according to the precepts of men, he would requite them in that wonder; *That he would make the wisdome of their wise men to perish*, even of those who had beene as their Gods to appoint their worship, and that the understanding of their prudent should be hid, it should not stead them, as we heard before.

Vengeance.
Esay 1. 14.
Hypocrisie causeth the Lord to loath all our service, and to take away his religion.
Prov. 15. 8.
Esay 1. 13.
Vers. 15.
Ier. 7. 12.
Vers. 14.
Esay 29. 14.

Application] To returne herein unto our selves, and to appeale

Application.

Our hypocrisie in performing a bare outward or lip-service.

peale to our very consciences, as the Lord will one day. May he not as justly charge this sin also upon our heads, as upon them? That howsoever his true worship continueth still amongst us, in the riches of his mercy, yet that the greatest part of us doe carrie this perswasion, That so long as we come unto the Church at times appointed, there pray according to the custome, and doe that outward service there injoyned, and finally have the rites of the Church and ceremonies duly observed, then is all well enough, what horrible sinnes soever we live in, yea, though we live altogether without any sound or saving knowledge, or any reformation of life at all. And are there not multitudes of our people, which retaining still the dregs of Poperie, thinke that they are in case good enough, and God must needs regard them, if they observe certaine daies and customes, which he never commanded, and such as are full of odious superstition? And in a word, whether all signes doe not proclaime this, that the multitude generally in many parts doth all, or the greatest part, which they doe in Gods worship, only according to the commandements of men: being as readie for any thing which can be discerned, and as the Papists doe too much insult, to receive Poperie againe, if it should be commanded (which plague our sinnes have justly deserved) or any other religion to be injoyned by authoritie, as now they doe the Gospell of Christ.

In others retaining still the dregs of Poperie.

Many of our people who doe all principally for the commandements of men, as readie to receive any other religion.

Let every one moreover, whom the God of this world hath not blinded altogether, but looke about and consider well, the estate of our times generally, upon his owne knowledge in the places about him, at least in our parts; How few they are which shew forth the soundnesse of their religion by an unfained love to the Gospell; by a holy conversation and obedient walking in Gods commandements, so as that we may justly hope of them, that they draw neere to God in their hearts indeed. Though after so long a time, wherein the Gospell hath been so professed amongst us, unlesse some few in those places where the Lord hath had and kept his continuall abode, by a faithfull, learned, constant ministerie, or in whose hearts he hath wrought more extraordinarily. And if it be so now in a farre more glorious light than they had, in these daies of the shining brightnesse of the Gospell, how can it be, but the like vengeance must needs come upon

How few soundly religious.

If so, how can we looke to escape the like vengeance or a heavier?

upon us or a heavier? What can we thinke; but that all our religion and service, (I meane all that which is so offered unto him) must needs be a burden, and a wearisomnesse, yea, and an abomination, as all the sacrifice of the wicked, and as all theirs was. *Esay* 1.13. Yea, how can we perswade our selves, but that the Lord speakes even thus to us: what have I to do with the multitude of your prayers, when you come to appeare before me? *Esay* 1.11. Make no moe prayers in vaine, for I will hide away mine eyes and turne away mine eare. I will make you as Ierusalem, as I have done many other famous Churches, whose candlesticks I have removed, for falling to the like hypocrisie, lukewarmnesse and profanenesse, like as I have oft almost accomplished it upon you heretofore. I appeale herein to every mans conscience, in the sight of the Lord; that if we finde it to be so, and withall the syncere worshippers amongst us, to be as the grapes left after the vintage, like as in *Micahs* time; and those only made a reproch and a gazing stocke for that same their holy profession; whether we have not just cause to tremble in feare and expectation of the same or a heavier vengeance, and to set us all to watch and pray, speedily turning vnto the Lord. *Mich.*7.1. And thus much of their hypocrisie hastening the Captivitie.

Hitherto have we seene these three generall sinnes spreading over all; first, the unfruitfulnesse of the Lords vineyard; secondly, the corruptions in all estates and callings; and thirdly, this universall hypocrisie.

Hitherto the three generall sinnes spreading over all.

Now we are to come to particulars: And that we may doe this in order, we are to begin at the heads of the people, the great men from whom next after the Priests, all these abominations did discend to all the people of the land; and that by these meanes: First, through want of execution of justice upon the offendors: Secondly, by countenancing vice, discountenancing vertue, by gracing the ungratious, disgracing all the gratious and good. Thirdly, by their wicked ensamples of all sorts. As the Priests were the head of this dead sea of abominations, and wickednesse did first flow from them, so the next whom the Lord specially complaines of, were the great men who were chiefly corrupted by the flatteries of the Priests and Prophets, and from whence all the iniquitie did so secondarily runne.

Now follow the sinnes of the chiefe of the people from whom wickednesse descended to all the rest, and the meanes how.

And for this cause the Lord doth oft times joyne them together as principals in this provocation. As in setting downe the historie how the plagues came, he saith: *The chiefe of the Priests and of the people, transgressed wonderfully, according to all the abominations of the heathen.* And then is added, *how they mocked his servants, and misused his messengers, and so went on untill there was no remedie.* By *Micah* also he saith thus, *The heads thereof judge for rewards, and the Priests teach for hire, the Prophets prophecie for money, and yet will they leane upon the Lord, saying, The Lord is among us, no evill can come unto us.* So *Zephanie*; *Her Princes within her are as roaring Lions, her Judges are as Wolves in the evening, which leave not the bones untill the morning*: then he adds, *Her Prophets are light and wicked persons, her Priests have polluted the Sanctuarie, they have wrested the Law*: Thus joyning them still, and making them the causes of all; for thereupon did the people flatter themselves that all was wel, so long as the Priests and great men did so, and so long as they had their ensample and countenance, they could not be ashamed, howsoever the Lord reproved them; *yea although he brought his judgements to light every morning.* And to omit all other places in all that reproofe of the Lord by *Ezechiel*, and in all the woes which he threatneth against the Pastors of Israel, for his flocke which was scattered and destroyed, declaring at whose hands he would require his sheepe; they are both included, both Pastors civill and ecclesiasticall, as all may see, both Priests and Rulers. The Lord having committed the care of his flocke to both, though in a different manner, and both of them to be accountable in their place.

2 *Chron.* 36.14.

Vers. 15.

Micb. 3.11.

Zeph. 3.3.

Vers. 5.

Ezek. 34.1,2,3,4. The Lord will require all his sheepe of the Pastors, and why.

Psal. 78.71,72.

Abomination 18.

The sinnes of the great men angring the Lord and bringing the Captivitie. And first their sinne in generall.

Covenant of the Magistrates and Rulers.

Covenant.] Whereas they had entred this Covenant with the Lord, that all of them, who had any authoritie, should have beene as God himselfe amongst the people,

in

in all holy carriage and execution of his judgements, according as he calleth them Gods by the mouth of *David*, ſaying, *God ſtandeth in the aſſembly of Gods: And I have ſaid ye are Gods.* Becauſe they had Gods judgements to execute and not their owne; as worthy *Iehoſophat* warned the Iudges, to looke to the execution of judgement for this cauſe. They were therefore ſo to carry themſelves, as the Lords Lieutenants, doing that which the Lord himſelfe being preſent would have done. They ought to have beene for that cauſe moſt free from all iniquitie as his Majeſtie, executing all things without reſpect of perſons or rewards. Yea to have been for him only, to ſet up and to maintaine his pure worſhip and religion, to deface and deſtroy utterly all other; as *David*, *Iehoſophat*, *Hezekiah*, and all the good rulers, and then the Lord had promiſed to be with them in the cauſe and judgement to defend and proſper them, or doing otherwiſe to take vengeance on them.

Pſal.82.2.6.

1.
To be as God in his place.
2 *Chro.19.6,7.*

Secondly, in regard hereof, they ought to have beene as fathers to all, chiefly to the good, to defend and maintaine the cauſe of all the helpleſſe, and by all meanes to procure their wealth. But to have beene enemies to all things which he hated, *to cut off all the workers of iniquitie, from the citie of the Lord,* yea they ſhould have beene Paſtors alſo; every way to feede and governe the people of the Lord, to ſave and to preſerve them from all cruell Wolves, and from all evils that might annoy them, either bodily or ſpirituall, temporall or eternall. Even ſuch as *David* (every one according to their place) of whom the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *That the Lord tooke him to feede his people in Iacob, and his inheritance in Iſrael. And that he fed them according to the ſimplicitie of his heart, and guided them by the diſcretion of his hands.*

2.
Pſal.101.6,7,8.
Fathers to all the people under them.
Pſ.78.70,71,72.

Pſal.78.71,72.

Thirdly, for this cauſe they ought to have beene the moſt temperate men of the Land, and of moſt power and command over their affections: yea lawes unto themſelves; as having commonly no ſuperiours to execute, or which will execute any lawes upon them, or call them to any account. Only the feare of the Lord ſhould have beene upon them, and ruled them above all other men, like as *Iehoſophat* charged the rulers; becauſe they have no other reſtraint, and have moe temptations than

3.
Moſt temperate and fearing God.
Pſal.51.4.

2 *Chr.19.7.*

than any others, and likewise because their sinne is greater than of any other, in as much as they come neerer unto the Lord, and therefore their plagues and judgements must needs be heavier in that respect also, than the plagues of any other.

Luke 10.13.22.3.

4. As lights and patternes. *Psal.* 101. 1,2,3.

Fourthly, they ought to have beene as lights in the midst of the people, as *David* vowed that he would be, yea presidents and patternes unto them, walking amongst them so uprightly and so holily, that all might learne of them, seeing that ever good or evill flowes from their ensample.

Finally, to have beene to the saving of every one, the destruction or hurt of none at all.

Transgressiõ. Their great men in stead hereof, and being as God, were become rebellious against God. *Esay* 1.26. *Ier.* 5.5. And of all other had cast off the Lords yoke and bursten his bonds. *Esay* 1.24. *Vers.* 21. Being murderers of the poore. Companions of theeves. Looking only at rewards. In stead of fathers they were roaring Lions. Judges wolves in the evening. *Mich.* 3.11.

Transgression.] The Lord complaines of them; that they were become directly contrary. For first, in stead of being Gods, and of executing his judgements in his place, and only in his feare, they were become rebellious against God. And *Ieremie* in his time saith, That in stead of knowing the lawes and judgements of their God, so as to obey them, they had *altogether broken the yoke, and bursten the bands.* Whence the Lord by *Esay* cals them his *enemies*, and his *adversaries*, even those who should have beene his chiefe servants, and Lieutenants in his place: saying, *Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.* Also in stead of releeving the poore, in executing of justice without respect, the Lord complaines of them, that they were become *murderers* of the poore. And more also, that they were *become companions of theeves, for that every one loved gifts, and followed after rewards. Therefore they did not judge the fatherlesse*, because they had no gifts to speak for them: *neither did the widowes cause come before them*, because they had no gold to prepare them entrance to their presence. Whereas they should have beene fathers to the poore people, the Lord by *Zephany* cries out of them, that they were as roaring Lions, making a prey of the poore at their pleasures; and who durst be so bold as once to open a mouth, or but to whisper against them, take they or doe whatsoever they listed. Their Iudges which should have redressed all this, *were as Wolves in the evening, which leave not the bones untill the morning.* They did as it may seeme, utterly consume and undoe the poore, by lingring their causes and deferring judgement, or the like evill practises,

because

becauſe they did only judge for rewards. But for the good people, the deare ſervants of the Lord, the ſinne of the great men was of all other moſt hainous: For whereas they ſhould have beene fathers to theſe in a ſpeciall manner, and as in Gods place to ſuccour and protect them from the violence of the wicked, that deſired to eat them up; thus to have a principal eie to them, as *David* vowes in his government that he would doe, to countenance, promote, and preferre them; for thus he proteſted, *that his eye ſhould be towards the faithfull in the land, that they might dwell with him, and thoſe that walked in perfect waies ſhould be his ſervants*; They contrarily became moſt unnaturall and cruell againſt theſe of all others. Herein the Lord ſtrangely ſets out their intolerable cruelty and injuſtice, thus expoſtulating this horrible wickedneſſe with them, by his Prophet *Micay*, ſaying, *Heare I pray you oh heads of Iacob, and ye Princes of the houſe of Iſrael, ſhould not ye know judgement.* And then he adds, *But they hate the good and love the evill, and plucke off their skinnes from them, and their fleſh from the bones: They eat alſo the fleſh of my people, and flay off their skin from them, and they breake their bones and chop them in peeces, as [meat] for the pot, and as fleſh for the caldron.* In which words he evidently compareth them unto Butchers and unto Cookes, killing and flaying, and chopping in peeces his poore people; to eat them up, and to glut themſelves with the ſpoiling of them at their pleaſures. But for the wicked whom they ſhould have diſcountenanced by all meanes, (like as *David* reſolved to ſet himſelfe againſt theſe, proteſting moreover *that no deceitfull perſon ſhould dwell in his houſe*; *and thoſe who told lies ſhould not tarry in his ſight*; *ſo he would betimes deſtroy all the wicked of the land, that he might cut off all the workers of iniquitie from the city of the Lord.*) Theſe cleane otherwiſe they loved and countenanced; theſe were the only ſervants and companions for them who could beſt fit their humour.

In ſtead of being fathers to the good, and having a ſpeciall eie to them.

Pſal. 101. 6.

They became moſt unnaturall and cruell.

Mich. 3. 1.

The Lord compares cruell rulers to butchers and cookes, flaying and chopping his people in peeces.

Pſal. 101. 7, 8.

They contrarily countenanced and advanced the wicked.

And delighted only in them.

Thirdly, whereas they of all others ſhould have had the chiefe command of their affections, and the greateſt meaſure of the feare of the Lord to have kept them in order, they, as the Prophet *Hoſea* ſpeaks of them, were as thoſe who remove the bounds. For ſo ſaith he, *The Princes of Iudah, are as they who remove the bounds.* Becauſe, (as it appeareth, no bounds of the feare of the

3.

They gave themſelves over to all licentiouſneſſe.

Hoſ. 5. 10.

the Lord, nor of common equitie could keepe them in any temper, but they gave over themselves to all licentiousnesse) they tooke and did what they listed at their pleasures: For as we heard *Ieremie* complaining, and as all their practises doe shew it, *They had altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds in peeces*, proclaiming thereby their haughtinesse against the Lord, and saying in their hearts, either altogether as *Pharo, Who is the Lord, that I should heare his voice:* or at the least as they in the 12. Psal. *Who is Lord over us*, that is, to command or to controule us.

Having cast off the Lords yoke. *Ier.* 5.5. *Esay* 2.17. *Exod.* 5.3.

Lastly, in stead of being such lights, they were commonly become very evill ensamples to the people, and either altogether irreligious, as may appeare by that which is spoken, or extremely corrupt in their religion. This is evident in that secret and most odious Idolatrie, and other wickednesse, which they committed in the Temple in the darke, in the secret chambers there, hard before the Captivitie. As the Lord shewed unto this our Prophet in this same vision, and in the chapter next before this, whereof we shall have occasion to speake after. By all these it must needs be, that they giving such bad ensample, and favouring the wicked only, the people must needs be hardened, untill the wrath of God came upon them.

4. In stead of being lights, they became most vile ensamples. *Ezek.* 8.7,8,9, 10,11.

Vengeance.] To come to the vengeance, whereby the Lord threatneth to recompence them accordingly.

Vengeance.

1. For that in stead of being as his vicegerents in his place, they were become his enemies in this sort, and grown so haughty, that they thought that they might doe what they listed themselves, and who should controule them, or who durst complaine of them. The Lord tels them thus much in effect: That howsoever they were so great and mighty, and durst set themselves against him, yet that he *was the Lord of hoasts, the mightie one of Israel*, (that is, he that set them up, and had all armies at command, to be avenged of them, and who was able by his basest creatures to get himselfe glory upon them, as upon proud *Pharo* and the Ægyptians) and therefore he *would ease himselfe of his adversaries, and avenge himselfe of his enemies*; he would cast them specially of all others into the furnace, and fine them, and restore them Iudges as at the first. *He would pull downe their haughtinesse and abase their loftinesse, the day should come* that

1. For becomming his enemies so haughtily. *Esa.* 1.23,24.

That he would ease himselfe and be avenged of them. *Esay* 1.23,24,25. *Esay* 2.17.

that he only would be exalted. And that ſo farre, that in the day of his vengeance they ſhould be glad (even the proudeſt of them) *to creepe into the holes to hide themſelves from his feare, and from the glory of his Majeſtie.* Thus it came to paſſe in this day of his vengeance; and ſhall much more at his glorious appearing, when he ſhall come to give ſentence of all his enemies, when both heaven and earth ſhall flie away from his preſence, and when all the wicked of the earth be they never ſo great, ſhall creepe into the holes of the rocks, and wiſh the mountaines and rocks to fall upon them, to daſh them in peeces, and to cover them from his preſence, agreeably to that which is foreſhewed in the Revelation.

Pull downe their haughtineſſe.
Verſ. 19.
Make them creepe into holes.
And wiſh the mountaines to cover them.
Apoc. 6. 15, 16.

Moreover for that ſinne, that in ſtead of being fathers they were become ſuch Lions and Wolves to his poore people: The Lord tels them by *Ieremie, That a Lion out of the Foreſt ſhould ſlay them, and a Wolfe out of the Wilderneſſe ſhould conſume them,* as it alſo came to paſſe. And ſeeing that they had no compaſſion of the poore, no pittie to heare their cries, but money and favour muſt ſtill carrie all away; that the crie *of the widow and fatherleſſe* could not poſſibly be heard of them, he foretels them plainly by his Prophet *Micah*, how he would requite them: *That they themſelves ſhould cry unto the Lord, but he would not heare them: he would hide away his face from them,* as they had hid theirs away from the poore.

2.
For that in ſtead of fathers they were ſuch Lions.
Ier. 5. 6.
That a Lion ſhould teare them.

Mich. 3. 4.
That they ſhould cry and not be heard.
Hoſ. 5. 10.

And finally, as they poured out themſelves to all licentiouſneſſe, ſo as no bounds could keepe them in; ſo he threatneth by *Hoſea, to poure out his wrath upon them like water*, that is, ſo abundantly as to overwhelme them; and that there ſhould be no ſtay nor bounds thereof, untill they were utterly carried away by the ſtreames of the ſame, as all was verified accordingly in their Captivitie.

Application.] To returne unto our ſelves, and in all reverence to come unto all you, whom the higheſt hath vouchſafed his lieutenants, and to beare his owne name in the earth, that you may helpe in the firſt place to prevent the evils threatned, for unto you chiefly the Lord of hoaſts ſpeaketh in his ſacred word, as you have ſeene, and by all other forewarnings. Conſider but with your ſelves, now at length, how neere all this judgement

Application,
In reverence to our Rulers and great men,

To conſider how neere this judgement was in each particular.

ment was in every particular, to have beene executed upon you, in the very first place: How neere you were unto the Lords fining-pan and his furnace spoken of! How neere to that judgement of theirs, to have all the haughtinesse of every one of you abased, and the Lord only exalted in glory! How neere it was that all of you, who had escaped in any place, should have beene glad to have runne into holes to have hid you from the presence of the Lord! How those Lions of the Forest were roaring upon you, the Wolves gaping to teare and consume you, with all your posteritie! How neere you were to that vengeance; that all of you who had escaped to have cried, might have cried long enough, but have found none to helpe or heare you, the Lord himselfe also utterly turning away his face! How neere unto that dreadfull desolation, to have the wrath of the Lord powred out upon you, not only as the waters of the old world, to have swept you away at once, for that had not beene so terrible, but as the fire and brimstone on Sodome, to have consumed your bodies in most loathsome manner, and your name and posteritie to have beene made most odious monuments of his severe displeasure against sinne, for ever in the earth. Oh consider well that one point; thinke on it againe ye worthy Nobles and Rulers of Britaine! That our most holy and most righteous God will not offer so to smite, much lesse to destroy a whole nation so without mercy, unlesse that there be just cause thereof: especially his owne people to whom he hath committed his pure religion, a people with whom he hath dwelt so long; and whom he hath in sundry respects, (as I take it, chiefly all our blessings considered together) so honoured even above all the world. You see cleane through these Prophets, how proportionall he makes his vengeance to the sinnes of *Iudah*, that out of their punishment all posteritie may reade their sinnes as written in great letters, and thereby be inforced to justifie his proceedings. You all saw your owne intended ruine prepared, and had welneere felt it, had not your tender Father thought on you in mercie. Every one of you therefore, be warned yet at length from the Lord, in it to reade your sinne, and to manifest your thankfulnesse indeed. The Popish conspirators pretended to have blowne up that house, as thereby to execute Gods just vengeance

Esay 1.25.

*Gen.*18.25.

Compare all wisely, and you will say the same.

What the Popish conspirators pretended in blowing up the Parliament house.

geance on you, because in it the lawes against their religion and practises had beene made and enacted: but may not we rather have cause to thinke on the other side, that our holy God brought that desolation & destruction so neere unto that place, as shewing thereby, that he himselfe had just cause to come so in that judgement against us all, even in that place above all other; for that, from it principally he hath looked now so many yeeres in a speciall manner, that the reformation of all these our abominations should have come so farre as in them lay; and chiefly the extirpation of that bloudy religion; of the cruelties whereof his poore Church amongst us had tasted so deeply. And this so much the more, for that he did it by some of the chiefe of those Idolatrous enemies, (I meane the pouder traitors) whom he had threatned to be unto us a snare and a destruction; *yea, a whip on our sides, and thornes in our eyes*, for suffering their religion to grow up among us, untill we perish out of this good land, which he hath given us. But you are wise, as the Angels of God. This therefore I leave unto your selves. Surely it may seeme to warne you, that something is amisse even amongst you. Peruse well your Covenant which you have entered into with your God, both as you are the servants and children of the highest, and more specially as you are his lieutenants. Be warned from your most loving and tender Father, that you never come unto the impietie of these rulers of Iudah, for then must your judgement be so many times heavier than ever was theirs; inasmuch as that, besides this their ensample, written for you to reade, your light is ten times more now in these daies of the Gospell; and this your deliverance as admirable, and in as much compassion, as ever the Lord extended before. Remember but the honour which he hath laid upon you, in all these your dignities. What could he have done more for you to grace you in the world, than thus to make you his vice-gerents; to set you upon his throne in the earth, to give you his owne judgements to execute; to commit the maintenance of his pure worship, and causes to your fidelitie? What greater honour could he have bestowed on you than this, to honour you with his owne name; and which is yet more, to make you foster-fathers of his owne children, even them, who are the heirs of his glorious kingdom, that you should looke

Esay 10.5, *&c.*

Ios. 23.13.

Great men are to remember the honour laid upon them and the end why God hath done it.

looke to the nouriſhing and defending them from all violence and wrong. That ye ſhould be the chiefe Paſtors of his little flocke, which he hath bought ſo dearely with the pretious bloud of his owne Sonne; to guide them prudently by the diſcretion of your hands, and to preſent them ſafe before him at his glorious appearing? Oh then ſtirre up your ſpirits to anſwer your places, your names and your dignities!

How ſhall bleſſings be multiplied upon your heads, and on your poſteritie, to root them in the earth, and to make you and them to ſhine moſt gloriouſly in the heavens eternally! Bethinke your ſelves ſeriouſly of his infinite compaſſion, in plucking you forth of the Furnace, as a brand out of the burning, and why he did it. And then that one meditation alone, will undoubtedly inforce every one of you in all true thankfulneſſe, to conſecrate your highneſſe, authoritie, riches, wiſdome, and whatſoever elſe, unto his heavenly Majeſtie. It cannot but put new life into you, and even compell you to ſeeke above all other things to advance the Scepter of his kingdome, to ſave his poore people, and to become tender fathers to his deare ones, profeſſing his name among us. It muſt needs cauſe you to bend all your forces againſt Babylon, for the deſolating of it, according to the commandement of the Lord of hoaſts; and of hindering it from being ever built againe amongſt us. Seeing that it had ſo neerely made you & your houſes deſolate, yea, and your name to have been left as a curſe in the earth; which ſhe hath ſo long and ſo cruelly intended, and which ſhe maketh certain account of to effect in time, unleſſe ſhe be thus prevented: when as they ſeeke nothing elſe day nor night, nor can ever give over, untill they have either wrought our ruine (which the Lord ſtill in mercy ever turne away) or at leaſt their owne, which we have juſt cauſe of hope to be neere at hand, if we will yet humbly meet the Lord. All their fawnings and flatteries have beene but the illuſions of their father the devill to creepe into your boſomes, to make themſelves ſtrong enough, thus to play the lions, and to execute the furie of devils, when their time ſhall ſerve. But when your hearts ſhall be ſo ſet for the Lord as through his mercie you had begun, he will undoubtedly much more turne all this their wickedneſſe upon their owne heads, than ever he did yet before,

Apoc. 18. 6.

before, and declare himselfe more wonderfull for you, and for his poore Israel, than ever former age hath seene. He hath given you store of worthy presidents in his booke. To omit *Iob* in his prosperitie, *David* his protestation, *Iehosophat*, *Hezekiah*, and *Iosiah*, in their reformations; that one holy *Nehemiah* is propounded by the Lord himselfe to all godly rulers, as a most rare mirror of all singular vertues; whose ensample is therefore of all other the likeliest to prevaile with you, because he had seene the miseries of a Captivitie, which your selves or yours had so neerly felt: which yet you may for ever turne away both from your selves and all this whole nation, and the Lord inable you thereunto. Set before your faces his feare of the Lord, his care for the poore Church; how he was touched for the miseries of Gods people, though he himselfe was in all prosperitie; his seeking the high God by fasting & prayer, for the Temple which lay ruinated, and for his poore countrimen, which he heard to be in great distresse; watching to take the first opportunitie, that ever the Lord offered him, not dismaied either by danger or travell, and withall the favour and successe which the Lord vouchsafed unto him. His industry to be particularly acquainted with the miserable estate of Ierusalem. His holy wisdome in moving the Magistrates for the good of the people; and how he prevailed so wondrously by propounding unto them his owne ensample, and himselfe being first in every good matter, knitting all hearts unto him by his compassion and bounty. His undaunted courage and resolution for the Lord and his causes. His present putting into execution, whatsoever was decreed. His care to see all things reformed and performed by himselfe, not committing that wholly to others. Happy and ten times happy are every one of you, to whom he shall vouchsafe this spirit of *Nehemiah*, each only within the limits which he hath prescribed unto you. And thus much also for this point, what cause we have to watch and to pray, for the Lords anger so neerely executed vpon our great men, and with them upon us all.

Nehemiahs ensample to be set before the face of all worthy Rulers.

Neh. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, & 6.

Abomination 19.

Taking up the evill fashions of other countries, hastening the Captivitie.

THus have we done with the sinne of their great men in generall; now to descend to some particulars, noted by the holy Ghost, in speciall manner to have hastened the vengeance; as first the taking up the evill fashions of other countries.

Covenant. That they should observe the manners prescribed them by the Lord. *Deut.* 4. 1. *Vers.* 5. *Vers.* 6. Gods promise to them on that condition.

Covenant.] This was the summe of that Covenant, which the Lord had entered into with them in this behalfe: *That they should observe and doe only those ordinances which he had commanded them, and then they should enter in and possesse the land.* These observations and manners should have beene their *wisdome in the sight of all other people, which should say of them, Only this people is wise and of understanding, and a great nation.* And moreover the Lord promised unto them observing these carefully, that he would be with them, and that *the very enemies should see his presence and his glory, in all that they called unto him for; that he would heare them and fight for them,* as indeed he did.

Contrarily they might not conforme themselves to Gods enemies. But to destroy every thing that might teach them their manners. *Deut.* 12. 1, 2, 3.

And on the other side the Lord charged them, *that when they should possesse the land of their enemies, they should make no covenant with them nor mariages.* He gives also this reason of it, because this affinitie and familiaritie with them, *would cause them to turne away from the Lord, and to serve other gods, and then his wrath would waxe hot against them, and he would destroy them suddenly.* Whence the Lord chargeth them to throw downe and to destroy every thing that might teach them their wicked manners; and especially their Idolatrous observations to the very pillars & groves, with the names of them, and whatsoever might any way call any of their wickednesse to remembrance; warning them that they should not doe so unto their God. The Lord also shewes them sundrie of their abominations, telling them, *that if they did them, their land should spue them out,* as it had done the former inhabitants. He gives them withall this reason, *for that they were a holy people unto him: He had chosen them to be a pretious people to himselfe above all the people of the earth.* And obeying

Levit. 18. 26, 27, 28. The Lord shewes them their particular abominations to warne them. *Deut.* 12. 12.

ing him he *would performe his covenant unto them, to love and to blesse them above all other people, and lay none of the plagues of Ægypt upon them.* And even as it was with them for these cursed nations, so it was for all other, that they might not learne the abominations of any other nation under heaven: but only those observations which the Lord their God had taught and commanded them, those only must they doe without adding or detracting: They were not to learne evill fashions of other nations, but all other nations were to learne good manners and fashions from them.

Vers. 13.
Vers. 15.
They might not learne of any other of the heathen.
Ezra. 9. 14.
Deut. 12. 32.

Transgression] But they in stead of obeying the Lord herein, and being content with him and with the good orders which he had given unto them, which was their chiefe honour and dignitie, before all the world fell unto this wickednesse, as the Lord chargeth it upon their heads: That through the contempt of his religion and government, they tooke up the odious fashions of other countries round about them, both East and West, neglecting those manners which he had appointed them in his heavenly word: Whence it may appeare, that the most barbarous strangers, and the mortallest enemies to his Church, which could bring in most new devices and fashions, were farre more esteemed, than the gravest, wisest, and holiest, of their owne countrimen, who observed only the waies and manners prescribed by the Lord. This was a principall cause why he forsooke and cast them off, because they first herein forsooke and cast off him. They would not any longer be taught their behaviour by him and his ordinances, nor conforme themselves to the waies which he had appointed; but they would be taught of his enemies, and conforme themselves to those their odious and wicked manners, which his soule abhorred. All this the Prophet *Esay* comprehends in one short sentence, foreshewing their ruine long before in these words: *Surely thou hast forsaken thy people, the house of Iacob, because they are full of the East manners, and are sorcerers as the Philistines, and doe abound with strange children.* As if the Prophet had said, Thou art even now ready to cast away thy people, which thou declarest by thy plagues and the tokens of thine anger; because they have drawne all kinde of abomina-

Transgressio.
They not content with the Lords ordinances,
Tooke up the odious fashions of other countries.

This a chiefe cause why the Lord did forsake them.

This *Esay* foresaw long before.
Esay 2. 6.
Consider and tremble.

tions

tions with greedineſſe from all the wicked countries round about; and have not reſted themſelves in the obedience of thy lawes and ſimplicitie of thy word; but have caſt it off, as being too baſe for them, preferring every new and ſtrange device before it; whereby they are become ſtrange children, and not the children of *Abraham*, nor the poſteritie of *Iacob*.

Chiefly they fell to doat upon the guiſes of the Babylonians, which God had ordained to be their ſcourge. *Ezek.* 23. 14. *Verſ.* 13. So as to be inamored with the very pictures of them. *Verſ.* 16. And to ſend meſſengers unto them, to increaſe their affinity. See *Iunius.* *Ezek.* 23. 16. *Eſay* 39. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, &c. *Verſ.* 6. *Ezek.* 23. 40. Yea ſending for the baſeſt of them to teach them their worſhip. *Ier.* 27. 3. *Ezek.* 23. 41. See *Iunius.* Read the place and obſerve it well. See *Iunius* on it. *Ezek.* 23. 40, 41, 42.

And to anger the Lord yet more, before their deſtruction they fell to *doat after the guiſes of the Babylonians*, above all others, even of thoſe whom he had ordained to be their ſcourge. Wherein they ſo far exceeded in rage towards them and their faſhions, that they doated not only upon the Captaines and Princes of the Aſſyrians adorned with divers ſuits, although they had been in ſuch danger before by them, but alſo upon the very pictures of the Caldeans, looking like Princes after the manner of the Babylonians, ſeeking by all meanes to make affinitie with them; and to faſhion themſelves to all their abominations. Inſomuch as they ſent meſſengers to increaſe and confirme this affinitie, and this conformitie of theirs to the Babylonians. Firſt, as is thought, by *Hezekiah* (otherwiſe ſo worthy a king) at that time when he ſhewed his treaſures unto the Embaſſadors of the king of Babylon: for which that moſt ſevere threatning is denounced againſt him, that all that was in his houſe, and which his fathers had laid up in ſtore, ſhould be carried into Babell; and his ſonnes which ſhould proceed from him, ſhould be Eunuches in the palace of the king of Babel. Yea moreover not reſting here, they proceeded yet further alſo to provoke the Lord to anger, in this raging after theſe ſtrangers, that they ſent for them from farre countries. They ſent not only unto the king of Edom, and Moab, and Ammon, and ſo to the Aſſyrians, Babylonians, Egyptians, and other Princes and Nobles, to have amitie and affinitie with them; but alſo they ſent for the baſeſt and moſt abject ſtrangers, to teach them the manner of the worſhip of their gods. And theſe comming ſo ſoone as they are ſent for, they doe entertaine like Princes or Angels ſent from God, and have companies aſſembled to receive them when they come, and to be taught by them. But hereof more in their Idolatrie, when we ſhall come to conſider that.

Vengeance.

Vengeance.] Now to returne to the vengeance. We heard, how

how for their rejecting the Lord to have the favour of these strangers, he threatned to forsake them, and to cast them off as none of his, but strange children, as it came to passe. And secondly, we have seene the vengeance denounced even to *Hezekiah* himselfe for his affinitie and familiaritie with them, and his over-much honouring them, that by them they should be spoiled of their honour, and of all their treasures and ornaments, all should be carried into Babel, and there they should be made slaves unto them, the very Nobles and Princes of Iudah, and even those who descended out of the loines of *Hezekiah*, for that very sinne of *Hezekiah* amongst others. And because they were so bewitched, to commit (as it were) adulterie with them, in all their abominations, the Lord threatned to *bring a multitude upon them* (meaning those Babylonians) *and the multitude should stone them with stones*, (that is, should so plague them, as he had appointed harlots to be punished) *and they should cut them with their swords, and slay their sonnes and their daughters, and burne up their houses with fire.*

Esay 2 6,7.
1. To be cast off as they cast off the Lord for these.
Esay 39.1,2,3. &c.
2. All to be carried into Babylon on which they so doted.
To be made slaves unto them.
Ezek. 23.43.46.
And they should execute Gods vengeance on them.
Vers. 47.

Thus would he cause all their wickednesse to cease out of the land, that all others might feare to doe after the same; and that all might know that he was the Lord, that is, he who rewardeth righteously.

That all other might feare by their ensample.

Finally, as they prepared and sanctified themselves, sparing no cost, for the entertaining of every of their basest Priests or others, who should teach them the worship of their Idols, as if to receive some noble guests; and attired themselves strangely, in all things like unto the Gallants and Nobles of the Babylonians, to please them, and to winne their favour, and so to seeme glorious in their eyes; so likewise it is good for us to observe, what the Lord threatneth by *Zephanie*, in the dayes of *Iosiah*, and beganne to accomplish so soone as ever *Iosiahs* breath was taken away. *Be still* (saith he) *at the presence of the Lord God: for the day of the Lord God, for the day of the Lord is at hand*; meaning thereby the vengeance that should beginne, so soone as *Iosiah* should be taken away. For the Lord (saith he) hath prepared a sacrifice and sanctified his guests, (meaning the Ægyptians and these Babylonians.) *And it shall be* (saith he) *in the day of the Lords sacrifice, that I will visit the Princes and the*

Ezek. 23.41,42, 43.

Zeph. 1.

Vers. 7.

The Lord sanctified the Babylonians for his guests against the time

when hee would make his sacrifice, & visit all who delighted in these vanities.

the Kings children, and all such as are clothed with strange apparell, viz. the Courtiers and all which gave themselves over to all kinde of vanities, and who studied nothing else, but how to vaunt and set out themselves in strange fashions and farre-fetched attires, thereby to appeare glorious in the eyes of all other. This is the vengeance.

Application to examine and prevent.

Application.] Now to come againe unto our selves, and to examine our owne consciences, concerning sundry of our manners; that we may prevent the like vengeance from the Lord, which we had so neerely felt. From whence have we fetched most of our fashions and unchristianlike practises, which are so rife amongst us in every place, so that the very earth is overloaden with them, that it is a wonder, that it doth not either swallow us up, or one way or other vomit us out? From whence have we learned our intolerable pride, and pranking our selves, with which we have and are so fearefully polluted, that we would rather be thought gods upon the earth, than poore wormes crawling in sinne, that which so sets out it selfe to the grieving of all good men and Angels, and to cause the very Sunne to be ashamed, in all kindes of our garish attire and wanton gestures, unbeseeming such as professe the Gospell of Christ Iesus? Whence have we learned our most filthie talke, at the best part whereof Christian modestie doth blush, wishing utterly to be estranged from all such companie? That impudent bragging in too many, of uncleane and filthie practises, which the light of nature hath loathed to heare, and much more to utter? That quaffing and charging with healths, which the very heathens saw most intolerable; yea, in the greatest riot and excesse, that (as I take it) we ever read of? From whence received we our boasting of valour to powre downe strong drinke? Our manhood in drinking others dead, or under the table; not only thus to make a sport of murdering others, both soules and bodies, as much as lieth in us, but also of making them most loathsome beasts, wallowing in their filth, and our selves the worst of all, save that we can stand, and carrie our shame more cleanly away? Oh that such had but hearts to thinke, that they doe not only destroy their soules and bodies eternally, without great repentance, but also as much as lieth in them, overthrow the

Whence our odious fashions.
Numb. 16. 30, 31, 32.
Levit. 18. 25.
Our intolerable pride.

Filthie talke.

Boasting of filthinesse.

Quaffing and charging with healths.
Hest. 1. 8.
Valour to powre downe strong drinke.
Manhood in drinking downe others.

An admonition to such.

health

health of their bodies, either to cut off their lives of a ſudden, or to bring them into ſome miſerable and deadly diſeaſes, to make their lives a burden; beſides the notorious abuſe of the good creatures of the Lord, which would releeve many of his deareſt ſervants, eſpecially it would have done in thoſe dayes of the extremeſt dearth and penurie, when the poore ſoules were faine to ſigh unto him, having none other to heare them! Oh doe theſe men thinke, that there is a righteous God, or that they muſt ever appeare before him, to give an account for all theſe things? What ſhould we aſcend any higher, to that ſacrificing to our bellies upon our knees; as if in ſcorning the Lord and his holy worſhip, and ſhewing openly what god we doe ſerve? For hardly have ſuch a knee for the Lord in any true devotion. Wretched belly to be made a God! The vengeance of *Herod*, or a heavier, muſt needs remaine for it, without unfained and ſerious repentance.

Sacrificing to our bellies on our knees.

To omit alſo our cruell and unnaturall poiſonings, ſo formerly and lately practiſed; and that ſeeking the utter ſubverſion of Princes, Nobles, State, Church and native countrey, to deſtroy all in a moment. Pardon me if many a time I beat upon this point, the time was, when we thought it could never be too odious; but thoſe dayes are almoſt gone; that the enemie thinketh the wound well-neere cured in our ſilence. Whence have we had our intendments of bloudie murdering, ſtabbing and maſſacring the Saints of the Lord, our lying, gulling, equivocating, practiſing ordinarily the moſt deteſtable Machiavellian devices, to bring our wickedeſt purpoſes to paſſe; ſetting the Lord and his feare with all common honeſtie aſide? From whence learned we that libelling, ſo commonly practiſed not many yeares ago, after the manner of the Paſquill of Rome; every one to caſt filth upon the faces of others; that the baſeſt might in contempt ſing out the ſhame of thoſe, whom they ſhould have beene afraid to touch with the leaſt diſgrace? How have we come to the top of all vaine dotage to exceed the rage of Iſrael, doating upon the pictures of the Babylonians; to doat after and to be drunken with, ſo many moſt laſcivious and filthie playes, repreſenting the geſtures, and acting with delight all kinde of moſt abominable vices: many of them fitter for the ſtewes

Cruell and unnaturall poyſonings.

Intendments of maſſacring.

Lying.
Gulling.
Machiavellian devices.
Libelling.

Laſcivious playes.

ſtewes in Italy, than the Goſpell in England; ſo cried out of by ſo many good parents, chiefly in London, as being the very Seminaries and nurſeries of all wickedneſſe, and the remedileſſe bane and utter ruine of their children and houſes? Have we not left off the ſearching of the holy booke of God, which unto our Fathers was much dearer than their lives, to rake the filthy ſinkes of every ſcurrilous and moſt loathſome Italian Pamphlet? Are not thoſe become to too many their Bibles and chiefe bookes of devotion? Hath not this beene within theſe few yeeres, the new guiſe of ſundrie to preſent thoſe Italian Pictures to the flower of our Nobilitie and Gentrie, to draw them to theſe wanton ſpectacles, and to the practiſe of theſe execrable abuſes, ſo to corrupt all the hope and glory of our Land? Doe they not know right well, or at leaſt Satan for them, that having thus corrupted our manners, they can eaſily by the juſt vengeance of God, corrupt and overthrow our Religion, and draw us to what religion they liſt, even unto that which wee have formerly deteſted? And firſt to a diſlike of the Goſpell, whereof, ſuch as ſo fall away utterly, never ſoundly received the love, but have formerly lived looſely in the profeſſion of it, without any conſcience to practiſe any part thereof ſincerely, as before the Lord Ieſus. From thence to a liking of Popery, by a masked ſhew of counterfeit holineſſe, in their Prieſts and Ieſuits, and other like ſlights and cunning devices. Having thus prevailed with the greater, have they not made ſure account that the multitude will ſoone follow of themſelves? Have they not hereby fully aſſured their owne hearts to effect that moſt eaſily in time, and without any danger to themſelves or to their Kingdome, which all their former moſt deſperate, bloudie and devilliſh deſignes and practiſes have not beene able to bring to paſſe? That is, ſo to bring in cloſely their abomination of deſolation into the holy place, and to ſet up cunningly that Whore of Babylon upon the Throne.

To paſſe over in ſilence the practiſing to bring into diſgrace and hatred all true practiſe of pietie, together with all the ſound lovers and profeſſors of the Goſpell, and contrarily to countenance the lewdeſt, as being a chiefe meanes to helpe to this purpoſe. And whence may we thinke theſe have learned all

Private reading Scriptures left off.

Filthie and ſcurrilous Pamphlets received in place.

Theſe Pictures preſented to the flower of our Gentrie.

Reade and conſider.

Babyloniſh policie, by corrupting our manners firſt, to overthrow our Religion.

Having prevailed with the greater, they make ſure account of the reſt.

To effect here by what by all other meanes they could not.

And by diſgracing the Goſpell.

all their deepe learning? Is not all this the Babyloniſh Italian guiſe? Can we then doubt from whom they have received their inſtructions in the myſteries of this their Art? May we not all evidently ſee, the moſt devilliſh counſell of that old *Balaam* the Sorcerer, as the only helpe remaining in a deſperate caſe to hold up his kingdome, and to prevaile againſt the Lords Iſrael, if it were poſſible? It is well worthie our beſt conſideration and diligent inquirie, that we may not any way wrong them, whether all ſeducers to Poperie, or to Popiſh Atheiſme, doe not uſually tread in the very ſteps of the Midianites? Whether we may not ſee the women of Midian, and as plainly ſeeme to behold the hands and counſell of *Balaam* in all this device, to bring them firſt thus to anger God, then to Idolatry, as ever Iſrael found it? Though we doe not haply obſerve it ſo generally, no more than they did, before that they had felt the hand of the Lord moſt heavily purſuing them almoſt to deſtruction, for this ſame very ſinne. Reade the hiſtory carefully, and let him that readeth underſtand. I will ſet downe the ſumme of it, as plainly and ſhortly as I can, yet wiſhing every one to lay it to heart, for it neerely concerneth us all, as a gracious fore-warning.

The device of old *Balaam* as the ſureſt ſtratagem.

This worthy our beſt conſideration, that we may not any way wrong them.

Num. 22.23,24, 25. 31.15,16.

When *Balaam* the falſe Prophet had ſet himſelfe (againſt his conſcience, and the Lords moſt direct prohibition) to goe to curſe the people of God, being blinded and drawne on, through hope of honour and the King of *Moabs* gold; and when he had alſo attempted it ſundrie wayes by his curſes, for that the King of *Moab* durſt in no caſe encounter with them; and when yet he ſtill ſaw that by all his curſes he was not able to prevaile, ſo long as Iſrael continued to feare the Lord; but that God ſtill turned his curſes into bleſſings, in ſo much as himſelfe is compelled to confeſſe, that there was no ſorcery againſt *Iacob*, nor ſouthſaying againſt Iſrael (meaning ſo long as they continued in their obedience) then he deviſed this wicked plot, which he thought would undoubtedly prevaile: To cauſe Iſrael to caſt off the feare of the Lord, and to ſinne againſt him, for that then his curſes would take place, and then would the Lord leave them into *Balaaks* hand. To this end he gave this wicked advice to the King of *Moab*, to lay theſe ſtumbling blocks before the children of Iſrael: That certaine of the women of Midian, of the

The ſumme of the hiſtory. *Balaams* proceeding.

Num. 23.23. There is no ſorcery againſt Iſrael, abiding in obedience.

Apoc. 2.14. *Num.* 25.1. *Num.* 31.16.

*Num.*25.1. *Num.*31.16.

the braveſt and moſt beautifull, by pranking and ſetting out themſelves to the ſhew, and ſo by familiaritie and wanton dalliance with the people of Iſrael, ſhould intice their young gallants, the chiefe of their ſtrength and glorie, and all other of the better ſort, who were wantonly given, to commit fornication with them. And then having thereby ſtollen their hearts after them, to draw them on by degrees, firſt to inward familiaritie, after to their feaſts, then to their ſacrifices, and thereby unto their Idolatrie, or at leaſt unto an approbation thereof by their preſence: which thing the Lord had forbidden, and his ſoule abhorred. That having thus grieved the Lord by theſe ſinnes, to cauſe him as much as might be, to depart from them, and alſo provoked him to leave them into their enemies hands, they might ſo at length prevaile againſt them.

This device was againſt the chiefe.

This helliſh ſtratagem may ſeeme eſpecially to have been laid againſt the chiefe, to corrupt the very principall amongſt them: for beſides that there can be no doubt, that the moſt beautifull & brave women were appointed to allure them, thoſe alſo whom *Phineas* thruſt thorow, are noted expreſly by the Holy Ghoſt to have deſcended of Princes; *Zimri* the Iſraelite, was the ſon of *Sala* Prince of the family of the Simeonites; and *Cozbi* was the daughter of a Prince of Midian. And moreover it appeareth to be very plaine by that, that the Lord commanded *Moſes* to hang up all the heads of the people before the Lord, againſt the Sun, that the indignation of his wrath might be turned away: partly for failing in execution of vengeance upon this horrible wickedneſſe; and that they ſtayed not the courſe of this iniquitie: but more ſpecially for being principals in this tranſgreſſion, as is moſt like; for that otherwiſe the baſer ſort durſt never have done it.

*Num.*25.14. *Verſ.*18.

*Num.*25.4.

How fearefull it is to let ſinne to grow up.

Application of the hiſtory.

To apply this is needleſſe, it applieth it ſelfe: for all the world knoweth what devices that *Balaam* of Rome hath uſed againſt us, open and ſecret, how many curſes he hath ſent forth, what buls, excommunications and thunderbolts, able to have ſet the whole world on fire, curſing us from place to place; and what juſt cauſe we have to conceive the like proceedings in that ſo generall corrupting of our manners, eſpecially in ſo many of the chiefe ſort, by drawing them firſt to all looſeneſſe and profaneneſſe, and ſo by little and little to a contempt of the Goſpell, with

a hatred of all unfainedly fearing the Lord; and ſo afterwards either altogether to their Idolatry, or to a liking and approbation thereof. For if when they have moſt polluted themſelves, they can have a Prieſt to abſolve them, and make them as pure as at Baptiſme, muſt not this needs draw them to an admiration of that religion, wherein they may thus live? This hath been long mourned for by them, who being wiſe hearted, have obſerved the courſes of times and places. And who hath not ſenſibly ſeene the anger and vengeance of the Lord for theſe ſins of that filthy wantonneſſe, and Popiſh Atheiſme over-ſpreading, and our danger thereby increaſing every houre, untill the Lord ſhall ſtir up more and more, not only the painfull and faithfull Miniſters, but more ſpecially all in chiefe authoritie for the redreſſe hereof, and ſo give us unfained repentance? That he, after he hath made us to ſee our ſin, may be pleaſed to take our cauſe into his owne hand, and be avenged of *Balaam* and the Midianites for us, which have ſo farre forth kindled his wrath againſt his owne choſen flocke. So that for theſe and other our ſtrange manners, at leaſt for very many of them, we may ſeeme cleerely to behold from whence they have come. Surely they never came from the Lord nor his heavenly religion, wherein he hath condemned them to the pit of hell, neither did our nation ever know moſt of them, ſo farre as we can conjecture, at leaſt ſo generally, untill within this few yeeres, that they may be deemed to have been driven to this as to their laſt refuge, when all their buls bellowing to rebellion, murderings, poiſonings, invaſions, forces, propheſies, expected dayes, have all utterly failed them. And ſo have directed their ſchollers to labor firſt to bring Italy into England; to make it a ſtewes of all this Babyloniſh filthineſſe. They have pardons enow for all their owne devout children: Thus have they bewitched us, to make us to doat after their manners, and turne to their Idolatry againe. Oh that we ſhould thus ever fall to run a whoring after their guiſes, and to be conformed to their abominations; and that after the time that the Lord had ſo diſcovered unto our nation, even to the very little children, and to the ſimpleſt plowmen (though otherwiſe moſt ignorant) the filthineſſe of Babylon, after her fall ſo begun, and had got us out of it ſo farre, yea after that he hath ſo many times ſince ſhewed us

Theſe never came from the Lord.
Nor knowne formerly in our nation in ſuch manner.

A myſterie whereby to bring Italy into England: & ſo to obtaine their purpoſes.
A juſt lamentation for that no warning will ſerve us, but we muſt doat after them.
Apoc. 18. 2. *Verſ.* 4.

*Apoc.*17.4.6. us openly the intolerable pride and crueltie of the Whore, with her bloudie minde against us. That she intends nothing else but our utter desolation, or at least to reigne againe as a Queene exalted above all that are called God or worshipped, and to make the Lords Anointed her vassall to tread upon, as upon the necks of the Emperours, and to make us all to fall downe and worship her, or else to taste of her bloudie inquisition and most hellish cruelties. Oh that we should ever come to be wearie of the Lord and of his sweet yoke, his heavenly lawes and ordinances, to chuse the Italian fashions, and to thrust our necks under the yoke of Babylon againe! How commeth it to passe, that we are not afraid of her sinnes, when we know that if we be partakers of them, we must also be partakers of her plagues: that we doe not stand so farre off as we can for feare of her torment! And to shut up this also; how heavie a judgement hath this beene upon us, and what a token of his anger, that so many of us should so addresse our selves to all the manners and the liking of this strumpet, and to entertaine Priests and Iesuites from Babylon, to teach us her worship, just as these did before the Captivitie, and cannot be warned! Yea that so many of us should so admire the basest amongst them, more than Christ Iesus himselfe and his glorious Gospell! Why doe we not rather cast away with all detestation, whatsoever whorish guise and fashion this harlot hath taken up to intoxicate her lovers: After that the Lord hath so many wayes made it manifest, that nothing will serve her but the butchering of us, to make us a sacrifice, and that she may sate her selfe with our bloud? Must he not needs for this call for his guests from Babylon, bring them to visit us, that are so transformed into their manners, and so reward us according to our seeking, and to our running a whoring after their strange vanities. Oh Lord at length open our eyes to see all their subtilties, with our imminent danger arising thereupon, and make us truly wise to prevent them in time!

*Apoc.*18.7.

To be wearie of the Lord and his wayes.

*Apoc.*18.4.

Vers. 10. What a heavie judgement this is.

Ezek. 23.40,41, 42,43.

*Apoc.*18.2.4. 14.9.

*Zeph.*1.7,8. And a calling for them to be his guests, when he will make a sacrifice of us.

Abomination 20.

Oppression of the poore hastening the Captivitie.

Covenant for justice and mercie.

Behold your patterne you great men, this only will bring you comfort in the evill day; and this will the Lord certainly require of you.

Iob 29. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, &c.
Vers. 11.
Vers. 12.
Vers. 13.
Vers. 14.

Oh where is *Iob* to be found!

Vers. 15.
Vers. 16.
Vers. 17.
Iob 31. 16.
Vers. 17.
Vers. 19.
Vers. 20.
Vers. 21.
Vers. 38.
Vers. 13.

Covenant.] To proceed to another degree of the sinne of their great men. Whereas by their Covenant with the Lord, the great men generally, and chiefly their Rulers, should haue beene in mercy, love, and all compassion towards the poore, such as *Iob* (in his affliction) comforts himselfe that he was in his prosperitie: for his ensample is recorded in Gods Booke, to be a president for all such men of great place. They should therfore have been such, as *when the eare had heard them, it should have blessed them, and when the eye had seen them, it should have given witnesse unto them. Such as would have delivered the poore that cried, and the fatherlesse and them that had no helpe. That the blessing of them that were ready to perish might have come upon them, and that they might thus have caused the widowes heart to rejoyce.*

Such as should *have put on justice to have covered them, and their righteous judgement might have beene as their robe and their crowne. Eyes to the blinde, and feet to the lame. To have beene fathers to the poore, and when they knew not the cause, to have sought it out diligently. To have broken the jawes of the unrighteous, and to have plucked the prey out of their teeth.* Such as should *never have restrained the poore of their* [*honest and just*] *desire, nor caused the eyes of the widow to faile,* [*in expecting comfort.*] Such as should *not have eaten their morsels alone, but releeved the poore, brought up the fatherlesse:* And should have seene *none to perish for lacke of cloathing, nor poore without covering; but to have made the loynes, viz.* the backes and bellies *of the poore to have blessed them.* Such as should never have *lift up their hand against the fatherlesse* [or helplesse] when they saw they might helpe them. *Nor have had the furrowes of their land to crie against them,* [either for pulling from others, or not paying the labourers their due wages.] Finally, they ought to have beene such as durst not have contemned or wronged the poorest drudge, or the most contemptible wretch of all the world. And

all

Verſ. 23.

Their courage againſt vice.
Iob 28. 7.
Verſ. 8.
Pſal. 82. 16.

all this, for the very feare and awe of the Lord, that ſhould thus alwaies have kept them in order.

And of the other ſide, for courage in puniſhing ſinne, and diſcountenancing all ungratiouſneſſe and vice, they ſhould have had that Majeſtie, that the proudeſt, nay the moſt outragious and impudent ſinners ſhould have beene glad to have runne to hide themſelves from their preſence. Thus ſhould they have beene as God himſelfe amongſt the people.

Tranſgreſſiõ.

Tranſgreſſion.] But the Lord complaines of them, that in ſtead of being ſuch for government, they became many of them, as children and women, and yet moſt cruell wringers of Gods poore people. In ſtead of being ſuch fathers as *Iob* was, they became ſtep-fathers, and Satan in place of God. So doth the Lord crie out of them, by the Prophet *Eſay*, *Children*, ſaith he, *are extortioners of my people, and women rule over them:* meaning that many of the chiefe among them were ſuch. Although they were wiſe to doe miſchiefe, to oppreſſe and vex Gods people, yet for governing and guiding them in the wayes of the Lord, & of ruling them in his feare, of ſuccouring the poore committed to them, they had no more ſufficiencie or fitneſſe than little children. But in ſtead of any true courage for the Lord, and to ſee his lawes executed, or for ſuch defence of the poore, as *Iob* ſpeaketh of, and plucking the prey out of the teeth of the mightie, they became altogether timorous and effeminate as women: giving over themſelves wholly to pleaſures; having no more power of themſelves and their unruly affections than the weakeſt women; much more like women and children in their cariage than the Elders of Iſrael. Hereupon it is, that the Lord there ſo mournes for his poore people, complaining that they that led them, cauſed them to erre, and deſtroyed the pathes of their feet. They were the principall cauſe of al the errors & evils amongſt the people, even their evill cariage before their eyes.

In ſtead of being fathers.

Eſay 3. 12.

Their great men were many of them as children.
Tremble all you who are ſuch, this is written for you.
For government and defence of the people, they were like women, timorous and effeminate.
Verſ. 12.
God hereupon laments for his people.

And notwithſtanding that they were thus timorous for any good, and effeminate, yet were they moſt cruell extortioners among the poore, as God complains there. Yea the very Ancients of the people, and the Princes, were as bad as the reſt. So that the Lord threatneth to enter into judgement with them, for their oppreſſions both of Church and Common-wealth. And firſt

They were moreover moſt cruell extortioners, though ſo effeminate.
Eſay 3. 14.
Even the very Ancients and chiefeſt.

for

for the oppressions of the Church, because they had eaten up the vineyard, to wit, the Church of God; all religion and pietie being destroyed and trodden under foot by them. Secondly, for the common-wealth: The spoile of the poore was in their houses. Their houses were stately built, and gorgeously furnished and inriched through the spoile and undoing of the poore.

And that both of Church and Common-wealth. *Vers* 14.

Whence the Lord compares them for their extreme extorting and wringing from the poore, unto Apothecaries and Millers. Because as the Apothecaries doe cut in peeces and bray their spices and drugs, so long as they can get any sweetnesse out of them; and the Millers doe grinde their corne whilest they can get any meale, leaving nothing but the huskes; so they did use as it were to bray and to beat the poore, to draw out from them by all racking and exactions, so long as there was any sweetnesse left in them at all; and to grinde their very faces so long as there was but a penny commoditie to be gotten from them. Yea as we saw in *Micah*, they are compared by the Lord to Cookes and to Butchers, for that they *plucked off their very skinnes, and their flesh from their bones.* That the Lord by his servant *Esay* asketh them, *what they had to doe thus cruelly to grinde and to use his people?* Who gave them any such authority or libertie over his people, his deare children, and pretious ones, the heires of his kingdome?

Vers. 15. The Lord compares extortioners to Apothecaries. And to Millers

Micah 3. 2. Asketh what they had to doe to deale thus with his people. *Esay* 3. 15.

The Prophet *Micah* also sets out yet further, to what a height their greedy covetousnesse and crueltie was growne, as likewise their boldnesse to take what they listed, and who durst say any thing? First he sheweth that they were so set upon wringing and hooking in all from the poore, that they could not take their sleep in their beds, for devising and casting, which way to bring in and to draw from their poore tenants and others. And looke what they devised in the night, that they put in practise in the morning; because their hands had power, they could and might doe what they list; there were no lawes nor limits to restraine them. But coveting fields or houses, they would take them at their pleasures, though to the oppressing of a man and his house; yea the utter undoing and beggering of a man and his whole posteritie. To this purpose the Prophet *Zephany*, hee shewes also that they had their under officers, as Bayliffes and Surveyers,

Micah 2. 1. They were so greedily set, that they could not sleep for it. *Vers.* 1. And would take away whatsoever they coveted, without regard of undoing, though never so many. *Vers* 2. *Zeph.* 1. 9. To this purpose they had their officers.

Surveyers, to ſpie out and informe, inhance and bring in, to fill their maſters houſes by their crueltie and deceit. And theſe are thus deſcribed to be ſuch, *as danced ſo proudly upon their maſters threſholds*; that is, ſuch as proudly vanted themſelves, as the only men in grace and favour with theſe great men their Maſters; and uſed to ſhew their authoritie and diligence to carry in, waiting about the gates of their Maſters Palaces, where the poore ſuiters uſed to attend, being faine to ſeeke to them, to cap and to crouch. By theſe meanes and the like, did all their mighty men *joyne houſe to houſe, and lay field to field*, as the Prophet *Eſay* complaines, *untill there was no place for the poore, that they might be placed by themſelves in the midſt of the earth.* So that *the crie of the poore* was in the eares of the Lord.

The only men in grace and favour with them.

Attending for ſuiters at their Maſters gates.

Hereby they joyned houſe to houſe, till there was no place for the poore.

Eſay 5.8.

Verſ. 9.

Eſay 3.14, 15.

Vengeance. To enter into judgement with the Ancients.

To deviſe a plague for them, as they deviſed to eat up the poore.

Mic. 2.1, 2, 3.

Verſ. 4.

That crying they ſhould not be heard any more than they heard the poore.

Micah 3.4.

Zeph. 1.9.

Eſay 5.8.

Vengeance.] For this the Lord in the firſt place threatneth *to enter into judgement with the Ancients of the people and the Princes*, both for the Church and Common-wealth. And for their deviſing thus to oppreſſe the poore, and to undoe them at their pleaſures, hee bids them to *behold, how hee had deviſed a plague for them*, in like manner, *out of which they ſhould not plucke their neckes; nor walke ſo proudly to doe what they liſt.* And that they ſhould crie out, *That like as they had waſted the poore, ſo themſelves were utterly conſumed. As they would not heare the cries of the poore, but hid away their faces, even ſo the Lord would requite them, by turning away his eare, and hiding his face.* Amongſt other he ſpecially threatneth to remember thoſe inſtruments of crueltie, the proud fleaing officers, *that they ſhould not dance ſo proudly.* And ſpecially hee denounceth a terrible woe, *for their joyning houſe to houſe, and laying land to land, that many houſes ſhould be deſolate for it, great and faire houſes without inhabitants*, as every word was in the Captivitie verified accordingly.

Eſpecially he threatneth to remember the proud unmercifull officers.

Abomi-

Abomination 21.

Oppression by ingressing and hoarding up, and also by inhanceing the prises of things to swallow up the poore, hastening the Captivitie.

Covenant.] Besides the former oppression, which was principally amongst the great men, there were other sorts also which did hasten their captivitie: for whereas at all times, especially in dearths, all the richer ought generally to have done as that worthy *Nehemiah* did, both himselfe, his brethren and servants: to have lent to the poore people money and corne freely; and then chiefly to have abstained from all burdens and exactions to vexe the poore thereby, yea, to have restored them their goods againe gotten by such violence, and that for the feare of the Lord, and the reproach of the Heathen about them, they dealt cleane contrarily.

Other sorts of oppressions, as by ingrossing. Behold and learne you rich men. *Nehem.* 5. 9, 10. What God requires of rich men in time of dearth.

Transgression.] The Prophet *Amos* cries out of a speciall kinde of oppression, which was growne very common amongst all their richer sort, and did hale on this Captivitie, as with cart-ropes, especially in times of dearth and famine. And that was this: That all they who had gathered any wealth, were generally become cormorants to swallow up the poorer sort, even all their substance; to racke each commoditie, and inhance the prises to the uttermost farthing, that could be gotten, to take excessive gaine of every thing which they dealt in; yea, to scrape and ingrosse into their hands, all kinde of commodities, even those which the Lord had sent for the common releefe of the poore. As to hoard up corne and all necessaries, to stay the sale of them, to raise thereby the prises of them presently, when there was but a little left in poore mens hands; and after when that little was gone out of their hands, then to sell at their pleasure even the refuse of it, and to make what measure and prises they listed; so to buy and sell the poore as it were for old shooes, to bring them to extreme beggery and slavery. Thus the rich in every place in the time of famine in stead of dispensing as Gods stewards unto the rest, and releeving them by bringing

Transgressiō.

All the richer cleane contrary were become cormorants to the poore. *Amos* 8. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Hoarding up corne to raise the prises.

Even the poore for shooes. A few to buy the substance of the rest.

bringing forth enough to ſupply their wants, and by lending them money and corne freely, (as worthy *Nehemiah* did) uſed to rob all the reſt, to get moſt of the wealth into their hands: and the reſt to live ordinarily in a baſe eſtate, and either in their debt and danger, as their ſervants, yea as peſants and ſlaves, or elſe in extreme penurie and beggerie; for thus much doe the words of *Amos* plainly import, where the Lord foreſhewes him this Captivitie, ſpeaking to the cormorants in this manner.

You that feare the Lord, learne of worthy *Nehemiah*. *Nehem.* 5. 9,10.

Amos 8. 4.
Verſ. 5.

Heare this oh yee that ſwallow up the poore, that yee may make the needie of the Land to faile, Saying, when will the new Moone be gone, that we may ſell corne? and the Sabbath, that we may ſet forth Wheat, and make the Ephah ſmall and the ſeekle great, and falſifie the weights by deceit? That we may buy the poore for ſilver, and the needie for ſhooes, and ſell the refuſe of the wheat?

Verſ. 6.

Vengeance. *Amos* 8. 7. The Lord will never forget this ſinne.

Vengeance.] For this ſinne above others the Lord *ſweares by the excellencie of Iacob, that he would never forget any of their workes: that the whole Land ſhould tremble for this, and every one ſhould mourne that dwelt therein, for the floud of Gods vengeance that ſhould ſuddenly over-flow them. That their Sunne ſhould goe downe at noone*; meaning that their miſery ſhould come on them in the midſt of their jollitie, and when they leaſt thought upon it. *Their ſongs,* [to wit, the ſongs in the Temple] *ſhould be howlings; their feaſts turned into lamentations. Sack-cloth ſhould be upon all loynes, their mourning ſhould be as for an only ſon, and the end thereof as a bitter day.* And which was yet more terrible, and a moſt righteous recompence, the Lord threatneth to reward unto them theſe cruelties of theirs, for making theſe dearths, when there was no ſuch juſt cauſe; not only by bringing a famine upon the bodies of the proudeſt & wealthieſt of them, but more alſo by bringing a ſpirituall famine upon their ſoules: *Not a famine of bread, nor a thirſt for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord.* That thoſe who in their proſperitie had made no reckoning of the word of God, *ſhould be glad to wander from ſea to ſea, from North to South to ſeeke it.* To runne to and fro to ſeeke where to heare a Sermon, or where to receive any comfort out of the Word, by the meaneſt of Gods ſervants, whom they had formerly deſpiſed, as being the refuſe of the world. They ſhould thus ſeeke the word of God then, to the end to aſ-

Verſ. 3.
Verſ. 10.

Verſ. 11. God threats to ſend a ſpirituall famine.

Verſ. 12. Hearken you greedie worldlings, you deſpiſers, and tremble.

ſwage

swage and quiet the horror of their consciences, to deliver them from the lake, and that they might finde any mercie from the Lord; and yet they should not finde it. When their beautifullest Virgins, and their bravest young gallants, (who are commonly the most notable despisers of the word) should perish in thirsting after that, which formerly they had so scorned. And thus it fell out upon them.

When they should seeke the Word, but not finde it. And perish with thirsting after it. *Amos* 8. 13.

There hath beene no need in former daies to apply these things, nor to search this sinne wich lights in holes and corners. Hath it not beene so spread over all our Land, in all times when God hath a little withdrawne our plentie, that *Amos* may seeme rather to speake of us, than of Iudah or Israel? What obscure Village hath there beene, where corne hath beene growing, wherein there have not beene some thus hoording and keeping up, especially in time of dearth, and still drawing in the corne into their hands, and so each other commoditie, by all kinde of devices (not to doe any good therewith, but to swallow up the poore) notwithstanding all our good lawes against it? Have we not growne to this height of unsatiable covetousnesse and unmercifulnesse, that if the Lord have sent but a little unseasonable weather, or any signes of lessening our plentie, that we have had then our cormorants to catch up all of a sudden at any rate? Did they not then practise to sweepe up whole markets, to buy it closely before the bell could ring, that the poore which have had but a little money to bestow, (to feed it may be a great many therewith) hardly could get any to save their lives? Have not these been their courses, thus to cause the poore to send forth, not only many fearful curses in their impatience, but withall many grievous sighes into the eares of the Lord, which he himselfe will certainly avenge? Besides all the grudging and discontentment, through this and other like oppressions of the poorer generally, chiefly at such times; which in the end are in danger to breake forth as fire, unlesse the Lord from heaven take away the occasions and fewell thereof. Shall Iudah mourne for this, and the whole Land tremble, and shall not we feare? Hath the Lord sworne that he will never forget it, & not only plague the bodies with slavery and hunger, but their soules also with famine, and shall we escape alway? Can our unmercifull men ever looke

Application to our unsatiable Corne-mongers.

Exod. 22. 22, 23. *Deut.* 15. 9. *Psal.* 12. 5. God will heare and avenge the sighes of the poore.

The danger of the discontentments of the poore thereby.

Oh Lord from heaven, behold, redresse and save.

Such can never eſcape Gods judgements.

looke to eſcape the vengeance of the Lord, who feare not to undoe all, for a little inriching of themſelves thereby? Muſt not the vengeance needs begin at them? Was it not fearefully begunne, and even ready, as the Prophet threatneth, to have overflowed all, as a mightie ſtreame of a ſudden, in the levellers inſurrection? Did not all who lived neere plainly ſee and dread the danger, and after admire Gods gracious deliverance? Though now it be utterly forgot, for that God did only warne us in ſuch tender love, and let us feele no more ſmart thereof, but to make us watchfull againſt future evils, and to ſee if yet at length we will amend, to prevent his conſuming wrath, which muſt needs come in the end, when and how it ſhall pleaſe his heavenly Majeſtie, unleſſe we ſtay it by our unfained repentance.

Gods warning forgotten in the Levellers inſurrection.

Cauſes of their oppreſſion angring the Lord.

And thus much of their hoording up and ſpoiling the poore, and ſo their conſuming of them. Now wee are to come to ſee the cauſes of all this their crueltie, and to conſider well whether the ſame be not alſo among us, the maine cauſes of all the oppreſſions and all other the cruelties of the unmercifull of the Land.

I finde foure principall cauſes, for which they muſt needs oppreſſe.

Firſt, to raiſe their Houſes and make themſelves great. Secondly, to ſupport their intolerable pride. A third, to maintaine their riot and all exceſſe in voluptuous pleaſures. A fourth and laſt, to ſatisfie their unſatiable covetouſneſſe, and the luſt of their eyes. Of theſe in order.

Abomination 22.

Oppreſſion to raiſe their Houſes.

Tranſgreſſio. Oppreſſion to raiſe their houſes.

Tranſgreſſion.] This firſt needs muſt increaſe their wringings and oppreſſions; for that they were generally given to raiſe their Houſes, to ſet their neſts on high; to make their name and poſteritie great in the earth; that they might domineere (as we ſay) and tyrannize at their wils, having none to checke or controule them. This we ſaw in the Prophet

Eſay;

Eſay; how *they joyned houſe to houſe, and laid field to field, untill there was no place for the poore.* And whereto; *that they might be placed by themſelves, as in the midſt of the earth:* That is, that they might have all the fineſt livings and ſweeteſt commodities in their owne hands: thoſe which would have ſerved, it may be, many hundreds of their brethren to have lived well upon. That ſo they might be as Princes by themſelves, and their brethren their ſlaves. So ſaith the Prophet *Habakkuk*, *They coveted an evill covetouſneſſe to their houſes*; that was, to advance themſelves by any, though the moſt undirect and odious meanes; *that they might ſet their neſts on high to eſcape from the power of the evill.* Meaning that they might ſettle and inrich themſelves, to the end that what evill ſoever came upon the Land, yet they might eſcape and be free; as ſuch kinde of men doe ever imagine; becauſe it commonly comes ſo to paſſe in leſſer afflictions, as in oppreſſions, famine, peſtilence, that they feele them not. And therefore ſuch wicked rich men are ordinarily at *a covenant with death, and at an agreement with hell*, as the Prophet *Eſay* ſpeakes, *That though a ſcourge paſſe thorow, it ſhall not come neere them.* Whereupon they care not whom they undoe, though the bloud of never ſo many crie to heaven for vengeance againſt them, yea the very ſtones of the walles: nor what iniquitie they commit, ſo that they have their pleaſures, and may ſo build their neſts aloft.

Eſay 5. 8.

Habak 2. 9. To build their neſts on high. To eſcape all evill. *Eſay* 28. 15.

Verſ. 15. Being at a covenant with death and hell. *Habakkuk* 2. 9, 10, 11, 12.

Vengeance.] The vengeance threatned for this, is a terrible woe denounced againſt all ſuch builders, *that thoſe great and faire houſes ſo built, ſhould be deſolate and without inhabitants*, as it came to paſſe: neither any of their poſterity, nor any other to dwell in them, but the nettles to over-grow them, and *Zim* and *Iim* to inhabit there, as is threatned to ſpoiling Babel. And whereas they imagined hereby to advance their name and poſterity, the Lord tels them by *Habakkuk*, *that they conſulted ſhame to their houſes, by deſtroying the poore people* of God, *and ſinned againſt their owne ſoules*, to bring a preſent and an eternall ſhame and deſtruction on themſelves and their poſterity. And that though there were no poore to cry, nor any living creature to complain, yet the very ſtones ſhould crie out of the walles ſo built, and the beames of the chambers ſhould anſwer; Woe to him that buildeth

Vengeance. To make their houſes deſolate. *Eſay* 5. 8. Oppreſſors may ſee this vengeance in every country. *Eſay* 13. 19. To build by oppreſſion is to conſult ſhame to their houſes. *Hab.* 2. 10. *Verſ.* 11. The very ſtones and timber ſhall crie againſt ſuch.

deth a towne with bloud, and erecteth a citie by iniquitie. So that thoſe things which ſuch men doe provide, are woes enow to themſelves and their poſteritie. But ſufficiently hereof, to warne all who are wiſe hearted.

Abomination 23.

The ſecond cauſe of their oppreſſion to ſupport their pride.

TO come to the ſecond cauſe, *viz.* to the end to ſupport and maintaine their intolerable pride, whereby they did ſo wonderfully provoke the eyes of the holy One of Iſrael. This pride of theirs was partly in their apparell, and that chiefly in their women; and partly alſo in their ſtately and coſtly buildings and furniture. Firſt, for that exceſſive pride of theirs in their apparel. The Lord having complained of their cruel extortions, and how *they did beat the poore into peeces, and grinde their verie faces*, as we heard, comes immediately to the abominable pride that was principally in their women, eſpecially in the women of Ieruſalem their chiefe citie: from which it went into all the parts of the land. As if intimating thereby plainly, that this horrible pride of the women was a principall cauſe of their oppreſſion: for ſo it muſt needs be; how otherwiſe could ſuch exceſſive pride be maintained, but by pinching, racking, and flaying the poore? But to come to their pride particularly.

Eſay 3. 15, 16. Behold yee haughtie women, it is you that helpe to grinde the faces of the poore, and to pull off their skins to ſupport your pride.

1 *Tim.* 2. 9, 10. Covenant, for their attire. What they ought to have beene.

1 *Pet.* 3. 1. *to* 7 Behold your attire you naturall daughters of *Sarah*, you true profeſſors of Chriſts Gospell.

Acts 9 36, 39. *Prov* 31. 20. *Deut.* 15 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Covenant.] Whereas their women ought to have been wholly governed by the word of the Lord; to have arrayed themſelves as the *daughters of Sarah, in comely apparell, with ſhamefaſtneſſe and modeſtie, in ſubjection and obedience to their husbands, and with all kinde of good works*, being gracious patternes to their children: Yea whereas they ſhould have beene full of mercie, pitie, compaſſion, and almes towards the poore; making garments as *Dorcas* to cleath the naked, chiefly the poore diſtreſſed Saints and ſervants of the Lord, thus ſtretching forth their hands to the needie, as *Salomon* ſpeakes of the vertuous huſ-wife, that ſo they might *have adorned the religion of the Lord*, which he had honoured them with above all the world: And that they might

have

have helped hereby to releeve the poore, which the Lord left amongſt them, to try them by, and for the exerciſe of their mercie. Finally, whereas in that abounding of all iniquitie, and thoſe manifeſt tokens of Gods anger and vengeance now ruſhing upon them, they ought as the women of *Nineveh*, at the warnings of their faithfull Prophets, to have humbled themſelves in ſack-cloth and aſhes to have pacified the Lord.

Ionas 3. 5, 6.

Tranſgreſſion.] They cleane contrarily provoked him to wrath, for at this very time, when all the holy Prophets ſo proclaimed this vengeance, they gave themſelves over to nothing ſo much, as to minde moſt gariſh and loathſome pride, in tricking, pranking, and ſetting out themſelves. Wherein they did impudently declare their moſt execrable hautineſſe by all ſignes and tokens, juſt as the Sodomites before their deſtruction. Except that herein they juſtified Sodome as the Lord ſpeakes, for that Sodomes pride was nothing in reſpect of theirs. This the Spirit of the Lord ſets out moſt particularly, to make it a warning to all ſucceeding ages. How they declared their ſhame impudently before his glorious preſence, and that every way upon their heads, their faces, eyes, haire, apparell in chaines, bracelets, rings, geſtures, gate, ſmell, and all to pleaſe the eyes of others, or to inflame them with filthie luſts; at leaſt to make themſelves to be thought more than mortall creatures. They did riſe hereupon to that fearfull height of pride, that we hardly imagine any nation did ever before. They degenerated ſo far from the daughters of *Sarah*, as that they ſhewed themſelves rather the brood of the curſed Cananites, which the Lord had caſt out before them: Or elſe the generation of that painted ſtrumpet *Iezabel*, who was caſt out at a window, in the midſt of her bewitching pride, eaten all with dogs, except the ſcalpe of her head, wherewith ſhe had deviſed her miſchiefe, and the palmes of her hands, the executioners of her crueltie, and alſo her feet which were ſo ſwift to all wickedneſſe, which the Lord cauſed to be left as monuments of his righteous vengeance on ſuch a curſed creature.

Tranſgreſſiõ. They minded nothing but pride, when God threatned them moſt. *Eſay* 3. 9. *Ezek.* 16. 48, 49. *Ezek.* 16. 48. See your ſelves and your vanitie, and be warned all you who are wiſe hearted. Their pride declared impudently every way. *Eſay* 3. 9, 16, 17. to the end. They were degenerate from the daughters of *Sarah*. More like the brood of the Cananites or of *Iezabel*. 2 *King.* 9. 30, 31, 32, 33. *Verſ.* 35.

Vengeance.] The Lord for this ſin menaceth and denounceth his vengeance, not only againſt theſe proud women themſelves, but alſo againſt their husbands for ſuffering and ſupporting it; and likewiſe againſt all others, delighting in this their odious

Vengeance. Oh that all given to this ſin had hearts to ſee the plagues

odious vanitie. Yea, he threatneth the whole land for this same very sinne, as it after came to passe.

And first for their women which were principall in this abomination, he threatneth to strip them of all that filthie pride, whereby they had so lifted up themselves against their maker. And in stead thereof, to send upon them such tearing of haire and wringing of hands, with all other kindes of shame, as never came upon women, and such as Christian modestie can hardly name; with miseries of all sorts both upon men and women, to cause utter desolation to all that whole nation. I will set downe the very words of the Prophet, wishing that every one who is given to this provocation, would but looke upon themselves in this glasse of the Prophet *Esay*, every Sabbath in the morning, when they are thus tricking and pranking themselves. I cannot doubt, but that then we should speedily see a pulling downe of this sin of sins, that now infecteth the very aire, vaunting it selfe so insolently in the sight of the Sunne. Whereby whilst such would seeme as glorious as Angels in the eyes of men, they are made as vile as the Angels of the bottomlesse pit in the eyes of the Lords glorious Majestie: to bee certainly throwne into it, unlesse they doe prevent it in time; for undoubtedly if they once did thorowly see their estate, (I meane all those who make this their chiefe studie so to set out themselves) those men of Ephesus who used curious Arts, did never more speedily confesse their sinfull vanities, at the hearing of *Paul*, and burne their books openly, which had beene the instruments of their wickednesse, though the value of them was very great, than these would change and cast away all their loathsome pride and garish attire, whereby they provoke the wrath against the whole land, and principally against their owne soules. The words of the Lord are these:

Because the daughters of Sion are haughtie, and walke with stretched out necks, and with [a] *wandring eyes, walking and* [b] *mincing as they goe, and making a tinkling with their feet: Therefore shall the Lord make the heads of the daughters of Sion bald; and shall discover their secret parts. In that day shall the Lord take away the ornaments of the slippers, and caules, and the round tires. The sweet balls and the bracelets, and the bonnets. The tires of the head, the ornaments*

that they bring upon themselves & theirs, with all the whole land, so far as they can. *Esay* 3.16,17. 25,26,27.

The words set downe. *Here is a glasse for proud women to view themselves in.* What this would worke rightly considered, *viz.* a pulling downe of pride.

And a confession of, and casting away of these vanities. *Acts* 19.18,19.

The description of their pride. *Esay* 3.16.

[a] Wanton eies.

[b] Tripping nicely.

Therefore the Lord shall smite with a scab, the crowne of the head of the daughter of Sion. *vers.* 17. *Ver.* 18. *vers.* 19.

ornaments of the legs, and the head-bands, the tablets and the earings. The rings and the muflers. The costly apparell, the veiles, and the wimples, and the crisping pins. The glasses, the fine linnens, the hoods, and the lawnes.

Vers. 20.
Vers. 21. &c.
Though our pride so faire exceed, as no tongue can expresse, yet be in whose sight it exalts it selfe, will one day shew each part in order before the whole world, to the eternall shame of all who doe not repent.
Here is a president.
How surely had all such felt this, if God had not thought on us in mercie and saved us, at the intended invasion and the powder treason.

After all this numbring up their severall trinkets, and parts of their pride, he descends to shew how the Lord would reward them in a meet proportion. That in stead of all their costly perfumes and sweet smels, they should have *stinke*, to wit, most noisome and loathsome savours in their siege, and in the cabines and holes, whither they that escaped should be thrust in their Captivitie, or where they should be glad to hide themselves. In stead of their brave and costly girdles, *they should have rends*; that is, they should goe in totters and rags as poore beggers, having never a whole coat unto their backs. In stead *of dressing of haire*, to wit, of all their frizling, crisping, curling, laying out their haire, their perukes, the hanging downe of their locks or tufts, or whatsoever they had, they should have *baldnesse*, when they had torne off their haire through the extremitie of their miserie. And in stead of their *rich and costly stomachers* and attires to set them forth, they should be glad of *sack-cloth*. Sack-cloth in token of humiliation, sack-cloth to cover their shame. And burning in stead of beautie. That *beautie* of theirs which they had so abused, it should now be painted with another die. It should be tanned and burnt with the Sunne, like the hue of the Black-mores.

Vers. 25.
Iudgement upon the men for being partakers.

Their men that had maintained this, should fall *by the sword*. It should avenge Gods quarrell against them. Their strength, that is, all their valorous and men of renowne, who had delighted and solaced themselves in this pride of theirs, should fall in the battell: they should have no more strength to stand in the day of Gods vengeance, than the weakest of the land.

Vers. 26.
Oh that any warning might serve at the last.

Then *her gates should mourne and lament, and she being desolate should sit on the ground*. Here should now be all the pride of Ierusalem, mourning, lamentation, and desolation, even as of a poore widow left alone, sitting upon the bare ground, weeping and wailing, with wringing the hands.

Application needlesse.

Application.] Thus much for their hainous provocation. To apply this is needlesse, seeing that all hearts that have any sense left,

left, cannot but wonder at the long forbearance, and endleſſe patience of our holy God herein, for that we doe ſo farre exceed all former ages in this moſt accurſed iniquitie, that nothing can remaine but expectation of the like or a heavier vengeance. The ſinne cries to heaven, the ſighes of the poore aſcend continually; when all their toyling and moyling, drudging and drawing, and the very ſpending of their bloud, are not able any way to feed this unſatiable monſter, with her brood that followes her. Surely nothing at all can turne it away, but at length the vengeance will come, but only our unfained repentance, and in the meane time the unceſſant cries of the ſervants of the Lord.

Sith all may wonder at the Lords forbearance.

When both the ſinne and the ſighes of the poore cry continually for vengeance to be taken upon this unſatiable monſter.

And thus much ſhortly for intolerable pride, and namely of our women, increaſing Gods anger; and what need we have to watch and to pray, yea to cry out day and night, that he may ſave us from the righteous vengeance, which it is plucking upon us.

Abomination 24.

Pride in ſumptuous buildings cauſing oppreſſion, haſtening the Captivitie.

NOw a little to ſee another kinde of their pride, for maintaining whereof they did likewiſe oppreſſe all the poore of the land; and for which among others the Lord threatned and brought this Captivitie.

Another kinde was in their ſumptuous and ſtately buildings erected by oppreſſion, whereunto all the money that they could ever draw into their hands by any kinde of exaction, with all the labours of their owne people and countrey about, were farre too little, to ſatisfie their proud and ambitious mindes. Each of them (no doubt) ſtriving to goe beyond others therein, or elſe all was nothing worth, for this is the nature of pride in whomſoever it is. This ſinne we ſaw in part before, ſet out by the Prophet *Eſay*: where he pronounceth that terrible woe, *for joyning houſe to houſe, and land to land, that they might be placed by themſelves, in the midſt of the earth*, and in the deſolation threatned againſt their faire and great houſes. And more by *Habakkuk* complaining

Pride in ſumptuous buildings.

Set out partly before. *Eſay* 5. 8.

complaining that *they conſulted to ſet their neſts on high, to make their houſes glorious.* For this is accounted a principall part of the glorie of any houſe, to wit, the ſtately buildings and rich furniture. But of all other places, the Lord hath moſt lively pictured this ſin, by the Prophet *Ieremie*, in the perſon of *Iehoiakim*, the ſonne of *Ioſiah*, after their plagues begun, and hard before this great Captivitie: becauſe it may ſeeme that he principally provoked the Lord herein, to the evill enſample of the reſt. And for that the reproofe of him might be a farre more juſt tax of all inferiours, though never ſo great.

Habak. 2. 9.

But moſt lively by *Ieremie* againſt *Iehoiakim.*

I will ſet downe the place and vengeance denounced againſt it, that all ambitious and unmercifull builders may ſee, what they are building for and haling on, and what abides for them, unleſſe they repent and meet the Lord ſpeedily. And the rather for that the cry of this ſin in many places hath beene ſo verie great. Thus ſaith the Lord by his Prophet *Ieremie*, ſpeaking firſt generally of all: *Woe to him that buildeth his houſe by unrighteouſneſſe*; [that is, by oppreſſion, ſpoiling and wringing from the poore] *and his chambers without equitie.* [that is, by unrighteouſneſſe, whether by overreaching bargaines, or other cunning devices, or howſoever unjuſtly.] *He uſeth his neighbour without wages, and giveth him not for his worke,* [the meaning may ſeeme to be this; He uſeth his neighbours, both his poore tenants, and others about him, without any due conſideration of their toyling or loſſe.] Then doth the Lord adjoyne what the ſpeeches of ſuch builders are. *I will build me a wide houſe* (ſaith he) *and large chambers. So he cutteth him out large windowes, and it is ſealed with cedar, and painted with vermilion.* Meaning that he will ſpare for no coſt, that ſhall make his houſe ſumptuous, though he built it with the depopulation of townes, and the oppreſſing and vexing all the Countrey about.

Ierem. 22. 13.
Looke here you who build or raiſe up your houſes by oppreſſion of the poore.

The unmerciſulneſſe of ambitious builders.
Verſ. 14.
Their pride.

Then the Prophet turnes his ſpeech, and applies it unto *Iehoiakim* particularly, thus: *Shalt thou reigne, becauſe thou cloſeſt thy ſelfe in cedar?* As if he ſhould ſay, Is this the way to eſtabliſh thy kingdome and thy houſe, by this oppreſſion of the poore that are under thee? *Did not thy father* (meaning *Ioſiah*) *eat and drinke and proſper, when he executed judgement and juſtice? When he judged the cauſe of the afflicted and the poore, he proſpered.* [that is,

Application to *Iehoiakim.*
Verſ. 15.
Harken all you who are guiltie of this crying ſin. This as all other Scriptures are written for you, and to you in them God ſpeaks.

The way for great men to proſper.

is, when he minded this only, in his dominions, that every ſubject ſhould have juſtice, even to the pooreſt begger. When he looked to the moſt afflicted and contemptible, received every ſupplication, and heard every complaint, conſidering of each cauſe equally, and bending his heart only thereunto.] *Was not this becauſe he knew me, ſaith the Lord?* [as if the Lord ſhould ſay, did he not all this, becauſe he was truly religious, for that he knew and feared me unfainedly, and ſought only how to pleaſe and honour me.] *But thine eyes and thine heart are only for thy covetouſneſſe,* (ſaith the Lord) *and for to ſhed innocent bloud, for oppreſſion and for deſtruction, even to doe this.* The meaning is, as may ſeeme moſt plainly: But thou, (in ſtead of looking to juſtice and equitie, and to the cauſes of the afflicted and poore, and how to pleaſe me, for thine owne good and the wealth of thy kingdome) ſetteſt thy heart only upon thy ſumptuous buildings, and other like pompous vanities fitting thereunto. And for this purpoſe thou art wholly carried away with unſatiable covetouſneſſe, to racke and to ſpoile the poore people at thy pleaſure, and to ſhed innocent bloud, even the bloud of all who ſhall reprove thy ſinnes, and who ſhall ſeeke to reforme thee by ſhewing thee my judgements for the ſame; for ſo the Holy Ghoſt hath recorded, that he dealt with *Vriah* the Prophet, whom he ſlue with the ſword, for prophecying according as *Ieremie* did, foretelling the judgement to come for their ſins. And thus had it beene alſo with *Ieremie* by the people, had not God graciouſly preſerved him, chiefly by the meanes of worthie *Ahikam*.

Verſ. 17.
Such are the wayes of every one that is greedy of gaine, hee would take away the life of the owners thereof.
Prov. 1. 19.
Let proud builders ſee whither their hearts are commonly carried.
Ierem. 26. 21, 22, 23.
They that will live in any evill way, muſt needs hate all who teſtifie of them, that their works are evill.
Job. 7. 7.
Ierem. 16. 14.
Ierem. 22. 18.

Therefore, *thus ſaith the Lord againſt Iehoiakim the ſonne of Ioſiah King of Iudah: They ſhall not lament him ſaying, Ah my brother, or oh my ſiſter, neither ſhall they mourne for him ſaying, Ah Lord, ah his glorie. He ſhall be buried as an aſſe is buried, even drawne and caſt without the gates of Ieruſalem.* [intimating that ſo intolerable was his oppreſſion to ſatisfie his moſt vaine and proud minde, that every man ſhould be wearie of him whilſt he lived, and at his death he ſhould not have a man to lament for him unfainedly, but all glad that they were eaſed of ſuch a burden: and that his buriall ſhould be without all reſpect and honour, as ſome noyſome ſavour, which every one wiſheth to have ſpeedily removed out of the way.]

Verſ. 19.
The caſe of all oppreſſors, and what love they have.
They live hated, and a burden to all.
Buried without honour.

After

After all this the Lord threatneth likewiſe *Ieconiah*, the ſonne of *Iehoiakim*, with a vehement proteſtation againſt him, even as he lived; *that though he were as the ſignet upon his right hand,* [the dearest of all the Princes of the earth] *yet he would plucke him thence,* and give him into *the hands of them that ſought his life; even into the hands of them whoſe faces he feared,* to be utterly ſpoiled, made a captive and a ſlave, both he and his *mother that bare* him, to be *carried away into a ſtrange countrey, and there to die.* And in the laſt place the Lord cries unto him thus: *Oh earth, earth, earth, heare the words of the Lord. Thus ſaith the Lord, write this man deſtitute of children, a man that ſhall not proſper in his dayes, for there ſhall be no man of his ſeed, that ſhall proſper and ſit upon the Throne of David, or beare rule any more in Iudah.* In which words the Lord manifeſteth, that all poſteritie ſhould be witneſſes of this juſt plague, as though it were regiſtred for perpetuall memory. And this is that which oppreſſors doe prepare, even a vengeance for their poſteritie, to root them out and their very memoriall.

Behold what oppreſſors provide for their children, to provoke the Lord to cut off their race. Verſ. 24.

Verſ. 26.

Verſ. 29. 30. Harken oh earth, the ſeed of the oppreſſors ſhal periſh. Gods promiſes are but conditionall, no not to *David. Pſal. 89. 29, 30, 31. 38, 39.*

To come againe unto our ſelves. May not the Lord take up as juſt a complaint againſt the greateſt part of our Gentrie, and the richer ſort generally, as againſt *Iehoiakim?* Is not this become the ordinary practiſe in every part of our Land? and have not the moſt thus ſet their hearts to build and trimme up their faire houſes, to decke and adorne them with all manner of rich and ſumptuous furniture, by the fleecing, racking, and oppreſſing the poore tenants at leaſt, howſoever the countrie about doth ſcape? But the place for the application hereof will be more fit, after the reſt of the chiefe cauſes of their oppreſſion ſet out. And thus much briefly for this, and what cauſe we have to watch and to pray continually againſt the vengeance that this one ſinne crieth for.

Application.

Abomination 25.

Oppreſſion to maintaine riot and exceſſe, haſtening the Captivitie.

Oppreſſion to maintaine riot.

TO proceed to the third cauſe of their oppreſſion and crueltie, which was to maintaine them to live in all riot and exceſſe.

Covenant.] Whereas the Lord vouchſafed them ſuch favours, as he never did to any other people, he looked for more obedience and thankfulneſſe, and alſo more compaſſion towards the poore, than he ever looked for of any other: but they in ſtead hereof abuſed all their bleſſings and abundance unto idleneſſe, Epicuriſme, and all kinde of luxurioufneſſe. Theſe were the things which he required of them for all his rich bounties, and which they had entred Covenant to performe unto him.

What the Lord requires for all his mercies, chiefly of rich men. *Exod.* 19. 4, 5, 6.

That they firſt ſhould ſet him *up to be their God, that they might keepe his ſtatutes and obſerve* his lawes; and that they ſhould never forget him who brought them out of Egypt and bondage, when *they enioyed all abundance* of good things [in that good Land.] To this end hee enjoyned them, that they ſhould have his *Commandements ever in their hearts.* Theſe ſhould be their talke and meditation continually. To this purpoſe alſo hee had ordained many meanes, ever to put them in minde hereof: as the writing his Commandements upon their gates and poſts, and alſo on their garments, beſides ſundrie other their ordinary helpes. Above all, hee had given them this ſpeciall charge, that at their feaſts in the plentifull uſe of all his good bleſſings, they ſhould never forget him, but bleſſe him for that good Land which he had given unto them. This ſhould have beene their principall talke at their feaſts, to ſtirre up one another to praiſe and ſerve him more cheerefully. And that then eſpecially they ſhould have *remembred the Levite, the Widow, the poore, and the fatherleſſe.*

To have his Commandements in their hearts. *Deut.* 6. 11, 12. & 66. 7.

Never to forget him.

To uſe all meanes thereunto. *Deut.* 8. 10, 11, 12.

Chiefly at their feaſts to bleſſe him, and ſtirre up one another to praiſe him.

To remember the poore and fatherleſſe ever, then eſpecially. *Eſay* 58 7

To conclude, that evermore *they ſhould deale their bread to the hungry, bring the poore that wandred into their houſes, to cover the naked, and never hide themſelves from their owne fleſh.* And then

then the Lord had made most gracious promises unto them, that *his glory should embrace them*; they should every way have beene the most glorious people of the whole earth.

Consider yee rich men what God lookes for alwaies at your hands.

Transgression.] But they in stead of this thankfull acknowledgement, and these workes of mercie, used to give over themselves wholly, for the wealthier sort of them, to all kinde of riot and superfluous vanities, altogether forgetting the Lord and all his great workes which he had done for them, and his commandements, as he complaineth. They gave up themselves to their bellies, and to satisfie their carnall lusts, never respecting the poore, nor delighting to speake or heare of any goodnesse in their feasts, but according to the corruption of their owne evill hearts. Thus were they wont to continue from morning unto night, drinking and carowsing, having all kinde of the finest musicke that could be invented, with all manner of dainties, and most pleasant wines, and whatsoever might inflame them; but never in the mean time remembring the Lord, for all the charge which he had laid upon them. They never regarded his worke what he had done for them, nor that good Land, nor all the abundance bestowed on them; no nor all their deliverances, nor yet the tokens and threatnings of his wrath, no not when it was ready to be powred downe upon them, nor the judgements and plagues which were upon them alreadie. Much lesse did they so much as thinke with any commiseration of the necessities and miseries of the poore people and servants of the Lord, but they rather oppressed and spoiled them, as we saw before, and as they must needs doe, to maintaine all this their excessive prodigality and glutting themselves in their fleshly pleasures.

Transgressiō. How they requited the Lord and used his benefits.

In pampering their bellies, never regarding the Lord. *Esay* 5. 11.

They regarded not the workes of the Lord.

Nor thought of the miseries of their brethren.

This we may see notably set out by the Prophet *Esay* in his fift Chapter, where having denounced that terrible woe against cruel oppressors, mentioned before, he comes in the next words to pronounce another woe not lesse fearefull, against this their shamefull excesse, as if against a chiefe cause of all this their crueltie. *Woe* (saith he) *to them that rise up early to follow drunkennesse, & to them that continue until night, that the wine doe inflame them,* [that is, who abide at it day by day, sparing neither paine nor cost, to satisfie their lusts.] *And the Harpe, Violl, Timbrell, and Pipe, and Wine are in their feasts,* [that is, all the excellentest musicke,

Esay 5. 11. A woe pronounced for this sin by *Esay*. *Here is a glasse for all given over to their pleasures.*

muſicke, and ſweeteſt melodie, with the moſt coſtly dainties and fineſt devices that can be procured to ſolace themſelves.] *but they regard not the worke of the Lord, neither conſider they the worke of his hands.* [That is, they conſider not what the Lord hath done for them; neither yet his mercies or judgements preſent, nor the plagues that he is about to bring upon them.]

The woe doubled by *Amos.* *Amos* 6. 1. *Verſ.* 4. *Looke here you that revell all night, ſleepe untill noone, turne night into day, and day into night. God tels you from heaven that he is angrie with you, and with the whole Land for your ſinne,* *Verſ.* 5. *Verſ.* 6. *Men given to pleaſures forget the affliction of Ioſeph.*

The Prophet *Amos*, he alſo crieth out againſt them, with another terrible woe, ſaying, *Woe to them that are at eaſe in Sion.* And after ſets them out, how they were at eaſe: being wholly given over to all pleaſures, bathing themſelves in them, minding nought elſe. *They lie*, ſaith he, *upon beds of Ivory*, [meaning upon their ſtately and coſtly beds,] *and ſtretch themſelves upon their ſoft beds, they eat the Lambes of the flockes, and Calves of the ſtall. They ſing to the ſound of the Violl; they invent to themſelves inſtruments of muſicke like David:* [as he for the Temple and Gods ſervice, ſo they for the ſervice of their luſts and fancies.] *They drinke wine in bowles and anoint themſelves with the chiefe oyntments:* [the meaning is, that chambering and eating, and muſicke and wine, gaming and revelling, and all vaine delights were their only life, as if there were no other life than it, nor any after this.] *But no man* (ſaith the Lord) *is ſory for the affliction of Ioſeph*, that is, not one of them is ſo much as touched with any commiſeration for their brethren, Gods faithfull ſervants, moſt unjuſtly vexed, and languiſhing under their afflictions and temptations. No man cares whether they ſinke or ſwimme, though they die with *Ieremie* in the dungeon, they have not a peny for them; when they have hundreds to caſt away, it may be at one throw of the Dice, or upon any vaine delight, yet not a crumme for them, though they ſtarve at their gates.

This ſinne was growne common amongſt their watch-men.

Eſay 56. 12. *The Seers given up to wine and good fellowſhip,*

This ſinne of exceſſe was become ſo common, that their watch-men and guides, their Prieſts and their Prophets were as deepe herein as any of the reſt, even they who ſhould with all care and faithfulneſſe, have watched over, warned and reſtrained all other by their admonitions, cenſures and holy enſamples. For they ſaid, *Come I will bring wine, and wee will fill our ſelves with ſtrong drinke, and to morrow ſhall be as this day, and much more abundant.* Thus they reſolved to be merry, and to play

play the good fellowes; they could see nothing amisse, nor any danger towards themselves or their flockes. To this end to beare out all this, they were as unsatiable as the rest, they of all other could never have sufficient, untill Gods vengeance had plucked all away, and filled their mouthes.

can see nothing amisse, untill the vengeance of God come. Vers. 11.

And to proceed yet one step higher, to provoke the Lord to the very uttermost herein; through this their pampering and drinking, their idlenesse and sleeping, they fell as it appeares to all uncleannesse, in words and in practises, almost without any blushing, haunting the most filthie places and companies, for so the Lord complaines of them, *that though he fed them to the full, yet they committed adultery, and assembled by companies at the harlots houses.* This was their intolerable abuse of the blessings of the Lord, and the proper fruit of their idlenesse and belly-cheere. Yea they did so exceed, as that they became impudent in all sorts of filthinesse: for so likewise saith the Lord, *That they rose up in the morning like fed horses, and every man neighed after his neighbors wife.* Signifying thereby that the brutish rage of many of them was as the rage of the fatted horse, whom neither bits, nor blowes, nor any danger could stay, but they would stil run on violently in pursuit of their pleasures, without al feare or shame, breaking out openly into all beastly abominations, like the men of Sodome. This was also crept in amongst the very Prophets at Jerusalem, there the Lord espied it, though it be like that it was there more covertly, *Si non castè, tamen cautè*, according as our Popish lesson is; Though not chastly, yet warily. Yet even there the Lord saw it, where all holinesse should haue beene, as we heard before.

From pampering and idlenesse, they fell to all uncleanneſſe.

Marke the fruits of exceſſe and idleneſſe. Ierem. 5. 7. Ezek. 16. 49.

From that to be impudent in sinning. *Ierem. 5. 8.*

Vncleane persons grow to be impudent, to shew their filthinesse openly like the Sodomites. Esay 3. 9.

This sin crept in amongst the Priests upon their excesse. *Jerem. 23. 14.*

Vengeance.] To come to the vengeance due to this sinne, as proportionable to it, as any of the former. The Lord saith thus: *Therefore is my people gone into Captivitie, because they had no knowledge.* Meaning, that seeing they were so senselesse, thus to give over themselves as captives and servants to their bellies and lusts, and to make slaves of the poore people to serve thereunto, they therefore should be made slaves unto their enemies. The Lord speakes of this long before, as if it were done alreadie, for the certaintie of it: *And their glory are men famished* (saith he) *and the multitude thereof is dried up with thirst.* Here

Vengeance. Esay 5. 13.

Men giving over themselves to earnall pleasures have no knowledge.

See what such prepare, Captivitie temporall, or eternall, or both.

was

was their just reward, hunger and thirst, that the most glorious amongst their Nobilitie and Gentrie should be as men pined; those bellies of theirs should clam, which they had made their gods; and all generally should perish with thirst, for abusing these good creatures of the Lord. And after he tels them how *hell had inlarged it selfe, and opened the mouth without measure, and their glory, their multitude, and their pompe, and he that reioyced amongst them, should descend into it.* As they had beene vnsatiable in their excesse of pleasures, in eating and in drinking, swallowing up all, yet never filled, *so hell had inlarged and opened it selfe.* Not only the grave, but even hell it selfe had opened her mouth without measure, for all the impenitent, to swallow up high and low, rich and poore, Nobilitie, and Comminaltie, which should die by famine, sword and pestilence, in the Captivitie, as it came to passe. And so all sorts together, and chiefly all *their pompe and pride, should descend into it*, and yet it should not be filled. Lastly, the Lord threatneth in that place, That by this meanes, *the proudest of them all*, even those who had most bathed themselves in their pleasures, and stretched out their necks, yea who had thus vanted themselves in their pompe and prodigalitie, that even they *should be brought downe to the depth of hell. And the Lord of hosts only would be exalted in this his so terrible a judgement in that day, yea and the most holy God be sanctified*, in the execution of this most righteous vengeance upon them. He would be knowne to deale most righteously, in measuring to them, as they did unto him, and unto the poore.

Hunger and thirst remaines for all belly-gods. Neither Gentrie nor greatnesse will save from Gods vengeance. Hell gapes for such.
Vers. 14.

Looke downe into this gulph you belly-gods. One right view would affright you from this sin; and make you to get farre off from the gaping of this pit.

Vers. 15.
The proudest must be brought downe to the depth of hell.
Vers. 16.

God from heaven will shew himselfe for this sin.
Amos 6.7.
The proudest must be captives with the first.
Vers. 8.
God abhorres all the excellencie and haughtinesse of such, and whatsoever they glory in: and the Palaces where their sinnes are most practised.
Vers 9.

The Prophet *Amos* likewise, first threatneth this Captivitie for it, and then denounceth thus much in effect; that even the statelyest and mightiest of them, those who had drunken their wine in bowles, which had fared so deliciously, and might think themselves safe by reason of their high and strong palaces, *that yet they should go with the first that went Captives.* And that their sorrowes were at hand, even theirs who had so stretched themselves on their beds above all the rest. Moreover the Prophet tels them plainly, *That the Lord had sworne by himselfe, that hee did abhorre the excellencie of Iacob, and loath their Palaces.* He did loath and detest all their riches, and the pompe of their Nobilitie and Gentrie, and whatsoever was esteemed most excellent amongst

mongst them. He hated their very Palaces, where these sins were chiefly practised. And for that Citie, which was as the head of all this iniquitie, he would deliver it up with all that was in it. The mortality should be so great therein, that there should not be living left to burie their dead: But they should be faine to burne the dead bodies of their deerest friends, the more easily to carie out the bones and the ashes; or to free them from the noysome savours; or that the enemies might not shew their rage upon the dead carcases. And which is of all other the most fearefull, that in their extremitie, and in the midst of Gods judgements, they should be as men desperate, even speechlesse, and so past all glorying of the Temple of the Lord, or that they were the people of the Lord. They should not be able now to comfort themselves in the Lord, nor to runne to him, whose name is a strong tower; no nor to make mention of him, nor yet remember him, but with horror and dread. Because he then should seeme to laugh at their destruction, being become their utter enemie, seeing they would not regard him when he sought to them, nor ever consider aright any of his workes or forewarnings.

The greatnesse of the mortalitie and loathsomenesse of these pampered bellies.

The fearfullest judgement, that such should not be able to runne to God then.

Desperation is the portion of the cup of such, when Gods vengeance comes.

Prov. 1. 24, 25, 26, 27.

Behold the Lords righteousnesse and tremble.

Ierem. 5. 9. *God must needs visit for such things, and his soule be avenged on such a Nation.* *Vers.* 10. *Micah* 2. 7.

Such a people are none of Gods, to be regarded of him.

And finally, for their impudencie in abominable uncleannesse growne from hence: The Lord asketh, how it was possible but he *must needs visit them for these things, and his very soule be avenged on such a Nation?* And therefore hee commandeth the Babylonian to climbe upon their wals, where all these provocations were committed, thus to anger him; to cast down their battlements, *to destroy them, but not to make a finall end.* This should be but the beginning of sorrowes unto them: and gives this reason; for that they were not the Lords [those were not the workes of the people of the Lord. They shewed themselves to have rebelliously cast off him, and therefore he would certainly cast off them also; he would not further acknowledge them when they cried unto him.]

Application.] It is needlesse for mee to apply. Our mercifull God give hearts to all who are as the excellencie of England, to consider herein their estate, and how the Lord himselfe speaks to them particularly, that all of them may prevent the like dreadfull plague, before that he sweare, that he hate and abhor all their Palaces and excellencie, when it will be too late to crie.

Application to every conscience.

crie. Wee may tremble and ſhiver to thinke how neere wee are come, and much more remembring our ſo late, and ſo incredible an eſcape. But this may ſerve to give us a little ſight of our ſinne. Though in all theſe, chiefly in the applications, I acknowledge how farre too ſhort I am, and bewaile mine owne weakneſſe, that having ſuch a patterne can come no neerer. Certainly, the lively view of theſe things would drive us all to our knees, to ſeeke as the people of Ninivie, to pacifie the Lords indignation. But he whoſe power is ſeene in the greateſt feebleneſſe, can make even this, or a weaker dart to pierce our hearts, if he intend mercie unto us, when his time of mercy is come, which I truſt hee doth, and ever crie for. And thus herein wee alſo ſee, what need we all have to watch and pray.

Abomination 26.

Vnſatiable covetouſneſſe cauſing oppreſſion, haſtening the Captivitie.

NOw are we to come to the laſt cauſe of their oppreſſion, which was unſatiable covetouſneſſe in all eſtates and callings, haſtening the Captivitie.

Covenant. Here is the ſtudie and covetouſneſſe in the Lords people, to ſet him up in their hearts. *Deut.* 26. 16, 17. *Exod.* 19. 5. To account all nothing, in regard of him. 1 *Cor.* 7. 31.

Covenant.] Whereas this ought to have beene their covetouſneſſe, and their ſtudie day and night, to have ſet up the Lord in their hearts, as was ſaid, to make his name high in praiſe and glory before all people, by keeping his Ordinances and Commandements. And to this end, thus to have ſhewed that they loved him indeed, with all their heart, ſoule, and ſtrength, in making account of all the wealth of the world, to be but as baggage in regard of him, who had thus ſet them in his heart, above all other people, as his chiefe treaſure. And briefly, whereas they ought to have uſed the good things of the world only hereunto, how to doe the uttermoſt honour and ſervice to his Highneſſe, to maintaine his Religion, and his pure and holy worſhip, to releeve their poore brethren, to keepe juſtice and judgement, and for any further love to it, to uſe it, as though they uſed it not, as not abuſing it.

Tranſgreſſion.]

Tranſgreſſion] They contrarily coveted generally *an evill covetouſneſſe*, as the Lord ſpeaketh by the Prophet *Habakkuk*. They withdrew their hearts from God, and every one made the world his god; ſetting it up in their hearts to worſhip it. So ſaith the Prophet *Ieremie*, That from the leaſt of them unto the greateſt, every one was given to covetouſneſſe, this wholly poſſeſſed their ſoules: yea, ſaith he, from the Prophet even to the Prieſt, all deale falſely. Every one did ſet himſelfe to caſt away all conſcience, ſo that they might gaine any thing: yea, the very Prophets did ſo, who of all other ſhould have beene cleere from this ſinne, and have warned all of it. This was another chiefe cauſe, that none of them could ſee the vengeance of God, the world had ſo blinded their eies. This made their teachers ſuch palpable flatterers, to ſell their tongues to ſpeake only for commoditie, and never any thing that might croſſe their preferment or gaine. This brought upon them that odious murdering ſin, ſpoken of before: *To heale the hurt of the people with faire words.* That their Prophets came generally to this paſſe, to touch and to heale the ſinnes of the people, as mothers or nurſes uſe to deale with light fals or ſores of little children, to ſeeme to make them whole by blowing upon them, or touching them ſoftly. Thus dealt they with the moſt grievous and deadly wounds of the people, eſpecially of the chiefeſt; when they muſt needs for a faſhion, ſeeme to ſpeake againſt their ſinnes, they would ſo handle them, as to make ſure, that they would not offend them. And afterwards if any came to any ſenſe of thoſe their fearefull ſinnes and Gods judgements, through the power and evidence of the Spirit, that was in the true Prophets, they uſed againe to heale up all, by crying peace, peace, God was a mercifull God, and therfore would not be ſo ſevere, nor bring any ſuch a plague, as thoſe raving Prophets threatned. But for the poorer ſort of the people, or whom they could crow over, if they did not put into their mouths, and let them take what they would, as *Elyes* ſonnes, they would prepare warre againſt them; all extremitie and rigour every way.

Hereupon they growed to this, that they could never have living enough. Whence the holy Ghoſt termes them ſo baſely, *greedy dogs that could never have enough*, and ſuch as could looke

Tranſgreſſio. They coveted an evill covetouſneſſe, ſetting up the world to worſhip. *Habak.2.9.* All were given to covetouſneſſe. *Jer.6.13.* From the leaſt to the greateſt, and to the very Prophets. The fruit of covetouſneſſe in the Prophets is to ſpeake only to pleaſe. *Ier.6.14.* The manner of healing with faire words.

Ier.6.14.

Mich.3.5. How greedy Prophets deale with thoſe whom they can crow over. *1 Sam.2.16.*

Eſay 56.11.

Covetous men can ſee nothing but for their owne advantage. *Mich.* 3.11.

to nothing but for their owne advantage and purpoſe, as we ſaw before. And hereupon alſo the Prophet *Micah* joynes Rulers and Prieſts and all together, as was ſhewed; that all was done for covetouſneſſe. The heads thereof judge for reward (ſaith he) the Prieſts teach for hire, and the Prophets prophecie for money. Now this being ſo generall, it could not but bring moſt grievous oppreſſion, to fill the gorge of this unſatiably devouring monſter, even utterly to ſwallow up the poore, to make them faile out of the earth, as *Amos* ſpeakes: To buy and ſell them, to beat and to grinde them, yea to flay and chop them in peeces, all fit for the pot; let their bloud crie never ſo loud, they heard not at all.

Amos 8.5,6.

Vengeance proportionable.

Vengeance.] We have ſeene their unſatiable covetouſneſſe, and that in their Prieſts and Prophets, which the Lord makes the very higheſt degree, that ever that ſinne could come unto; and an evident demonſtration, how generall this abomination was. Now we are to come to the vengeance moſt proportionable to it, and firſt upon theſe Prophets, that for this filthy lucre devoured and deſtroyed both ſoules and bodies of the people by their flatteries, whereby themſelves did continually prey upon them firſt, and afterwards cauſe them to feele that cruell oppreſſion by the enemies. The Lord having pronounced the vengeance againſt other oppreſſors by *Micah*, that he would not heare their cries, when they ſhould be oppreſſed, but hide away his face, as they had done from the poore, comes unto the Prophets, as the chiefe offenders, in theſe words; *Thus ſaith the Lord, concerning the Prophets that deceive my people, and bite them with their teeth, and crie peace, but if a man put not into their mouthes they prepare warre againſt him. Therefore night ſhall be unto you for a viſion, and darkneſſe for a divination, and the Sunne ſhall goe downe over the Prophets, and the day ſhall be darke over them.* The meaning of the Lord is moſt cleere, as it was ſhortly touched before: Firſt, what ſhould come upon them before the Captivitie, and be fully accompliſhed in it. That for all their minding the world, whereby they could not ſee, or diſcerne any thing elſe, but the world, as *Eſay* complaines, he would ſend upon them ſuch a palpable darkneſſe, (giving them up wholly to the god of the world, to blinde their eies) *that the day ſhould*

The plague on covetous Prophets. *Mich.* 3.2,3,4.

Verſ. 5,6. The forerunner of their ſlavery.

The Sunne goeth downe over flattering Prophets at noone.

Eſay 56.10.

2 *Cor.* 4.4.

be

be darke over them. That though they lived in the cleere light of Gods word, and that the abominations were ſo notorious, and the judgements haſtening on ſo faſt, that all muſt needs grope them, yea, and the godly mourne and crie for them; yet they ſhould not be able to ſee neither abominations nor plagues, no more than blinde men: Howſoever they were quick-ſighted for their purpoſes, and were the only men, that ſeemed to be learned, and had ſweet tongues to crie peace, peace, when the true Prophets were ſcoffed at and caſt out from among them. And that hence it ſhould come to paſſe that they ſhould not be able to crie out againſt the peoples ſinnes, with any zeale or power to awake them, or bring them to repentance, as Gods true Prophets ever did; but be as if they lived in the darkeſt times of ignorance. So ſhould they grope and fumble at mens ſinnes and Gods judgements, as blinde men uſe to do, or as they that grope in the darkeſt nights. Thus they ſhould talke of mens ſinnes and Gods anger afarre off, as men that ſpeake in a dreame without all ſenſe or feeling, or without ever comming neere to awaken mens conſciences, and ſo their words ſhould paſſe away as a tale. After the Prophet proceeds to another judgement to come upon them as a fruit of the former; *That the Seers ſhould be aſhamed, and the Soothſayers confounded, and cover their lips, becauſe they had no anſwer from God.* That is, as the next verſe plainly ſheweth, when they ſaw that their preaching was without all power and life, and not like the preaching of the true Prophets. The people might by them heare a voice, and many ſweet words, and alſo much humane eloquence and learning, but no anſwer from the Lord; much to tickle their eares and delight them for the preſent, but no efficacie to mollifie or turne the hearts of the people to the Lord, as the word by the true Prophets did. Then they ſhould be aſhamed and confounded in themſelves, when they ſhould evidently diſcerne this. All this is moſt manifeſt to be the drift of the holy Ghoſt, as was ſaid, by that oppoſition which the Prophet makes, comparing his preaching at that time and ſo of the true Prophets, with the preaching of thoſe greedy Prophets, that their preaching was cleane of another manner, as from another Spirit; for ſo the words are cleare, *Yet notwithſtanding* (ſaith Micah)

Oh the wretched eſtate of covetous Prophets.

Amos 7.12. *Ier.* 26.36.

Ezek. 33.31,32. *Eſay* 58.1.

Mich. 3.7.

The difference of the preaching of the true Prophets and the covetous worldlings.

Micah) I am full of the Spirit of the Lord, and of judgement, and of ſtrength, to declare unto Iacob his tranſgreſſion, and to Iſrael his ſinne. That is, howſoever theſe are commonly deſtitute of all power of the Spirit in their preaching, and doe only beat the winde, but bring no good to the people, by turning them from their ſinnes or ſhaking their hearts, yet I am contrarily full of power in my preaching, through the Spirit of the Lord, to declare his judgements. The gifts of God in him and in the other true Prophets did increaſe in thoſe worſt times, as may appeare; as the ſinnes increaſed, ſo his abilitie to diſcover the ſins of men, to reprove them, and to proclaime Gods judgements, was daily more and more; to make the hearts of the proudeſt to tremble; even to ſhake the hearts of all, whom God had not fearefully hardned. And this was a plaine difference, that the Lord had put betweene his true Prophets and the falſe; thoſe who had the Spirit of the Lord, and them who had only the ſpirit of the world. And thus it was after not only with our Saviour, that he ſpake with authoritie and not as the Scribes, but alſo in the preaching of all his Diſciples and holy Apoſtles, according to the meaſure of grace beſtowed upon them ſeverally. This was now the firſt vengeance on theſe greedy Prophets, and ever one chiefe cauſe, of their rage againſt the true Prophets. The full accompliſhment of it, was at the Captivitie, when they ſaw how they had deceived and devoured the people, and now they could not looke for any anſwer from the Lord, nothing but a perpetuall night and darkneſſe come upon them in the midſt of their pompe and jollitie.

This is the ſame with that in *Eſay* 56. 10. mentioned before, where he complaines how their watchmen had no underſtanding, they were ſuch greedy dogs as could never have enough, they could not barke to drive away the Wolfe, doe nothing but ſleepe and delight therein. But I will not further rehearſe it, let every one lay it to heart.

Finally, for this ſo unſatiable greedineſſe in the Prophets, is not that a moſt righteous judgement, wherein the Lord cals *all the beaſts of the field, even all the beaſts of the foreſt*, the ravenous and bloudie enemies, *to come and to devoure his flocke?* Thoſe that ſhould purſue them as eagerly, as they had purſued the filthie

Mich. 3. 8.

The power of the true Prophets ſhewed forth chiefly in the time of abounding of iniquitie and approching of judgement. *Ier.* 23. 32.

Matth. 7. 19. *Luke* 10. 17, 18. *Ier.* 20. 2, 7, 8. *Ier.* 26. 9, 11. 2 *Chron.* 18. 23. *Iohn* 11. 48. *Iohn* 12. 19.

The full accõpliſhment of the judgement at the Captivitie, when a perpetuall night came on thoſe Prophets. *Eſay* 56. 10.

Coveton ſneſſe, blindneſſe, dumbneſſe, ſleeping, goe together in the Prophets. *Eſay.* 56. 9.

The juſt vengeance on all for their unſatiable greedineſſe to be devoured of the unſatiable enemies.

filthie world, and swallow them up as unsatiably, as they had swallowed up the poore of the land. And the rather at this time, because their watchmen were now all blinde, the beasts might come at their pleasure, they could not discover them, they were now all dumbe dogs, they could not barke against them. Spoile, kill or devoure as they would.

Now give me leave a little to returne unto you all, who spoile and eat up the poore, or have any way your hands in their bloud (for hereupon oppression and crueltie are termed by the name of bloud and shedding of bloud, because it is a consuming of the poore, and the very taking away of their lives, or making their lives uncomfortable, so as they shall eat their bread with sorrow, in sighing and wishing for death, rather than to live in that miserie) to trie if by any meanes the Lord may turne some of you from this crying sinne.

Application to all sorts of spoilers of the poore.

And first to you who have need of all that you can wring from the poore, to raise up your houses, to build your nests on high and get your selves a name, by laying land to land, and joyning house to house; let me aske of you as in the name of the Lord; Would ye seeke to make your houses desolate; to prepare them for other spoylers, or to have them left for a perpetuall desolation in the earth? Would ye consult to bring an everlasting shame upon your selves and posteritie? Would ye provide woes and nothing but woes to your selves and yours? The Lord from heaven hath told you, that you take the very way, and that it shall so come to passe. This is written for you.

1. To all who oppresse to make themselves great.

1 *Cor.* 10.6.

Secondly, for you who pretending to be daughters of *Sarah*, and yet walke (as the Prophet complaines) with stretched out necks, and are the chiefe to helpe to flea, and to pluck off the skins of the poore, to support and maintaine your unmeasurable and intolerable pride, when as haply some one of your garments or suits shall be the undoing of sundrie of your poore tenants. Will you needs bring upon your selves and upon the whole nation, all those calamities that came upon *Iudah*, and those haughtie daughters of *Zion*? Would ye have those noysome savours, which now ye cannot endure to heare named, their rags and tatters which you loath to behold; their sackcloth, their tearing of haire, their sun-burning? Would ye have all

2. To the hautie, on whose garments is found the bloud of the poore.

all the strength and glory of your land to fall in the battell, all your husbands and friends to be meat for the enemie? Would ye have your gates to mourne, and none to passe thorow them, your selves to sit as poore forlorne widowes, lamenting, howling, and wringing your hands? The Lord tels you, that this is that for which you doe so tricke up your selves, this you are preparing, though you thinke not so much. This is that which without unfained repentance must certainly come unto you, or a farre more hideous vengeance in hell, when it will be altogether too late to crie or to turne.

3 To the sumptuous builders.

Thirdly, for you who must needs plague and pill the poore, for your sumptuous and stately buildings, and you whose houses have beene so raised, and beautified, as the Lord speakes of *Iehoiakims*; and have your hearts set wholly thereunto, to doe it, though by spoiling of townes, inclosing of commons, wronging your countries, without any regard of your places, or without any mercie towards the poore, would ye live odious to all, an unprofitable burden of the earth? Would ye have your burials without honour, all to be glad to be rid of you, and to leave your names as a curse in the earth? Would ye have the Lord to plucke you off, though ye were as the signet upon his right hand, to give you up to them whose faces you feare, to the bloudie Babylonian, to be made captives and slaves as *Iehoiakim*, both you and yours? Oh earth, earth, earth, heare you the word of the Lord: will you needs provoke the highest to write you destitute of children, men that shall not prosper in the earth?

Looke whether he have not verified it upon many houses in your remembrance, and how neere all were unto it? will he not spare the king, the sonne of holy *Iosiah*, if he become such an oppressor, nor his race; no, not the seed and posteritie of *David* himselfe, but he will cut them off; and can you ever imagine to escape? Why doe ye deceive your selves?

4. To them that oppresse to pamper themselves, saucing all their dainties with the bloud of the poore.

Fourthly, for you that beat and grinde the faces of the poore, for pampering your bellies, and doe nothing almost but riot and feast, faring deliciously, as the rich glutton, every day, bathing your selves in pleasures, and can never be brought to remember the Lord, what he hath done for you, what he is preparing, nor ever have a thought of the afflictions and miseries

which

which many of your poore brethren doe endure: what slaves you make of them, how pretious soever they are in the eies of the Lord. Would you become such servants to your enemies? doe you long for a captivitie both bodily and spirituall, temporall and eternall? would you have your glory as men famished, and all to perish with thirst? will you not understand what the Lord tels you, that even hell gapes for you, opening her mouth without measure, as you have beene unmeasurable in devouring the poore, and swallowing up the good creatures of the Lord, to satisfie your unsatiable bellies? would you have all to descend into it? all to perish together by the sword, famine and pestilence, and the Lord to sanctifie and exalt himselfe in so terrible a judgement? would you have him to abhorre all your excellencie and your stately palaces, and have nothing but despaire when that vengeance shall come? If you would have it so, then you may goe on, this is the high way unto it. The Lord God hath sworne it, he will certainly performe it. It was even fully accomplished upon us, but that he yet still thought on us in mercie. He cannot but visit for these things, he cannot but be avenged on such a nation. *Amos 6.8.* *Ier.5.9.*

Fifthly, for you mightie ingrossers, you unmercifull cornemongers and hoorders up of all commodities, to get all into your hands, to buy the poore for old shooes, and make them to live as drudges, to eat their bread in wearinesse and griefe all the daies of their lives; will you not heare and beleeve at length, no not though the Lord sweare unto you, that he will never forget this sinne? Are you not afraid lest the whole land should tremble for it, as the Lord hath pronounced; lest your Sunne should goe downe at noone, all your wealth and pompe should be gone in a moment? lest our songs should be howlings, our feasts lamentation, and our righteous God bring upon us all, that spirituall famine, that you should seeke a drop of comfort to your soules, out of the word of the Lord, a little to quench your thirst, and not be able to finde it. 5. To the mightie ingrossers, whose houses are filled with the spoiles of the poore.

Finally, for all you who have set up the world to worship, and have it in your hearts, and to that end doe covet an evill covetousnesse, to get by hooke or by crook, casting away all conscience for any penny gaine, and are become as ravenous beasts to To all who have set up the world in their hearts to worship.

to ſpoile for a prey, preying on one another; and eſpecially you that ſhould be the Seers of the Lord, for to you of all other the Lord principally ſpeaks, and is angry with you above all other for this ſinne. Would you have the day darke over you? that judgement to come upon you that came upon their Prophets? that ſhame to cover your lips, when you have no viſion from the Lord? would you have that perpetuall night? Oh all ye, that are unſatiable and can never have enough, would you have all the beaſts of the Foreſt to come to devoure, to kill and to ſpoile, and none to cry againſt them? How much better is it for all to bethinke our ſelves in time, and every one to hearken to the counſell of the Lord! each to breake off theſe our crying ſinnes by righteouſneſſe, and our unmercifulneſſe by mercy towards the poore, as *Daniel* adviſeth *Nebuchadnezzar*.

Dan. 4.24.

The true way to that which is deſired of all.

1.

How to ſeeke to be great indeed.

Iob 29.31.

How much better were it for you, that ſeeke to be great, to labour to attaine to it, by being great and gracious in the eies of your God, great in the love and hearts of his people; great as that holy *Iob* was in his proſperitie; great in *cauſing the bleſſings of them that are ready to periſh to come upon you*; great and glorious *in putting on juſtice as a robe, righteouſneſſe and mercy as a crowne, plucking the prey out of the teeth of the mightie.* This ſhould make all the wicked to tremble at your preſence. *Thus when the eye ſaw you it ſhould bleſſe you, and when the eare heard you it ſhould give witneſſe unto you.* Let *Iob* be your patterne in his higheſt dignitie. Looke oft upon thoſe two Chapters of his booke, 29. 31. Then let come upon us whatſoever the Lord hath determined; you ſhall have that comfort, that *Iob* had in his affliction, and double honour and greatneſſe in the end as he had, and in the meane time more true greatneſſe, honor and feare, than all the great oppreſſors of the earth.

2

How to be beautifull and glorious indeed.

And you worthy Ladies and all others that deſire to be glorious in beautie and your rich attire, to delight the eyes of all ſorts, contend which of you ſhall be moſt glorious in the eies of the King of kings, in the glittering attire of Chriſt Ieſus: which of you ſhall be moſt glorious within, who ſhall excell others in modeſtie and grace, that even the words of grace may drop from your lips; who amongſt you ſhall be the moſt forward in chuſing *Maries* part, ſitting at the feet of Chriſt to heare him; for ſhe is

therefore

therefore renowned for ever. This part ſhall never be taken from you. Strive who ſhall be moſt ready to entertaine Chriſt in his poore members, in feeding him and performing all holy ſervices unto him; in making garments for the naked, ſo cauſing both backes and bellies of the poore to bleſſe you. Let this be your contention, who amongſt you ſhall be the moſt excellent patternes unto your ſervants and unto your children, that they may ever call you bleſſed, and all other hearing of you may magnifie our loving God for you. Thus ſhall you be moſt truly glorious in the preſence of the higheſt, and of the Angels that excell in dignitie, yea in the eies of all creatures. Your name ſhall be preſently as a moſt ſweet perfume, farre and neere, and left as a bleſſing in the earth to poſteritie.

How to ſet our neſts on high, and to build them for eternitie.

That I may ſpeake alſo one word to you, whoſe hearts are ſo ſet upon your ſtate, and ſumptuous buildings, and who would indeed ſet your neſts aloft for your ſelves and yours, build them above the ſtars, lay not their foundations in the duſt, but upon Chriſt Ieſus. Set your affections on that heavenly building not made with hands, that celeſtiall Ieruſalem, the glory whereof is in part ſhewed unto you in the Revelation, by the Lord himſelfe, to draw all your hearts unto it. Seeke to make all your children inheritors thereof, your ſelves and yours glorious in grace and good workes; and your houſes to become the Tabernacles and Churches of Chriſt, each in his order. This is the way to make your houſes moſt ſumptuous, and the only meanes to true proſperitie and perpetuitie, when you and yours thus feare the Lord, being thus truly religious and mercifull indeed. Thus did good *Ioſiah* proſper, thus had many of your forefathers abundance of all outward things, when they ſhewed mercy to the poore, love to their tenants, rejoycing to ſee them to thrive under thē, ſpending that on hoſpitalitie, which you do upon theſe vanities, though they never ſaw that glorious light of Chriſts Goſpell, which he hath vouchſafed unto you. This is that rich furniture, whereby you ſhall be ever glorious, in the eies of the Lord and of all his Saints, and root your poſteritie in the earth.

Apoc.21.22.

How to give over our ſelves to all delights, and to be prodigall therein.

To you in like manner, who ſo give over your ſelves unto all pleaſures and exceſſe of vanitie, that all is far too little to ſerve for the ſame. Prevent the Lords vengeance: delight your ſelves in

in him. How much happier ſhall it be for you, if his favour may fill your hearts with joy unſpeakable; his ſpirit may be your comforter; your good conſcience a continuall feaſt within you, witneſſing unto you, that you have both gotten your riches well, and imployed them aright; to the honour of his name, the furtherance of his Goſpell, with the comfort of his people, and to all good workes, being prodigall herein.

How to hoord up and ingroſſe.

And for you ye great rich men of the earth; is the time of the declaration of Gods anger, and of the affliction of his people, as eſpecially the daies of dearth are, a time of your triumph, to make a prey of the poore, to ſell them for ſhooes? How happy ſhould you be if you would learne this new leſſon of holy *Nehemiah*, and put it preſently in practiſe, to lend money and corne, or the like, to every poore wretch freely and without increaſe, as juſt occaſion is offered, and their neceſſitie requireth it; to reſtore unto them whatſoever you have wrongfully taken from them; to take off from their ſhoulders every heavie burden, and each grievous exaction? yea in all times of dearth eſpecially, to avoid by all meanes to be chargeable to the poore people, not taking ſo much as your owne, becauſe of the feare of the Lord? Thus ſhould you hoord up in the heavens, and make you bagges that ſhould never waxe old. Now is your time to adde to this heape of mercy; and to lend on uſury unto the Lord. This ſhould ever give you a confident boldneſſe, to intreat the Lord, with that worthy *Nehemiah*, to remember you in mercy according to that, even according to the uprightneſſe of your hearts in this worke, and be a moſt ſure witneſſe of the ſoundneſſe of your faith. This ſhould draw your affections to the heavens, where your treaſure ſhall be thus laid up, and make you an entrance abundantly to that glorious kingdome, to wait and to long for it. The day will come when you ſhall wiſh that you had done it, and that you had thus taken your time.

Neh. 5. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Verſ. 15.

Luke 12. 33.

Neh. 13. 14.

How to covet a holy covetouſneſſe.

And to conclude with you all, who have the world in your hearts, even you whom it hath ſo blinded, that ye cannot diſcerne when you doe evill, oppreſſing, vexing and ſpoiling the poore, nor yet can behold the vengeance of the Lord approching, or how ye call for all the cruell enemies to devoure, eſpecially ye the Seers of the Lord, who by gazing only on the world,

and

and harkning after it, are made ſo blinde and ſo deafe, that you can receive no anſwer as from the Spirit of the Lord, more than carnall men, and have utterly loſt all power of the Spirit, to tell the people of their ſinnes. How bleſſed ſhould your eſtate be, if you could once have your hearts poſſeſſed with that holy covetouſneſſe, which was in the hearts of the true Prophets, to ſeeke to pacifie the Lord, to ſave all your flockes, and all his poore people, from the wrath that is to come, and from all their cruell enemies. That ſo ye might with that holy Prophet *Micah*, be full of the power of the Spirit of the Lord, of judgement and ſtrength to declare unto *Iacob* his tranſgreſſion and to *Iſrael* his ſinne; ſo to turne every one from their evill way. That you might be repleniſhed with the power of *Eliah*, to turne the hearts of all ſorts, to the obedience of the juſt, to eſcape that ſhame that muſt cover the mouthes of all the dumbe for ever, and that heavie wrath that is approching for deſtroying your flockes. Oh Lord in mercy grant, that at length this holy covetouſneſſe may fill all our hearts, that we may be unſatiable in our deſire to ſave all thy people, and to pacifie thy Majeſtie, ſo as thou maiſt ever delight to dwell amongſt us. Amen, Amen.

And hitherto for all ſorts of oppreſſions of the poore, grieving the Lord and haſtening his plagues, and what cauſe we have thereupon to watch and to pray continually.

Abomination 27.

The generall Apoſtaſie of Iudah, haſtening the Captivitie.

THus have we ſeene a little view of their extreme oppreſſion and cruelty angring the Lord, and the ſeverall cauſes thereof. Now for the reſt of their abominations, becauſe it were infinite to proſecute all, I will make choice of ſome of the principall, and thoſe I will reduce to theſe three heads.

The reſt of their abominations reduced to three heads.

Firſt, that there was amongſt them a generall apoſtaſie, and falling from the Lord ſtill more and more.

1. Apoſtaſie.

Secondly, that they had likewiſe extreme diviſions, that almoſt all were ſet one againſt another.

2. Diviſions.

Thirdly,

3. Vncurableneſſe.

Their apoſtaſie in
1. Prophaneneſſe,
2. Idolatry,
3. Atheiſme.

Their apoſtaſie in generall.

They were ever ſtarting from the Lord. *Heb.*3.12.

Having only good motions, but preſently turning backe.

*Pſa.*78.56,57. As their forefathers.

2 *Chron.*28.19.

2 *Chron.*29.30. & 31.1. Their zeale in the beginning of the daies of *Hezekiah.*

2 *Chron.*30. *Verſ.*21.26.

2 *Chron.*31.1.

Though it was but as the morning dew.

Thirdly, that no meanes could doe them any further good, but they were paſt all hope of recovery.

And firſt in their apoſtaſie or falling from God; ſome of them fell to extreme prophaneneſſe; others to Idolatrie, like the countries about; a third ſort to utter Atheiſme, to deny the Lord altogether, to provoke his Majeſtie to the uttermoſt thereby.

And firſt ſhortly for their apoſtaſie in generall, this the Lord complaines of, as of a ſinne for which he could not ſpare them: That there were in them evill hearts through vnbeleefe, to ſtart away continually, and to depart away from the living God. Of which ſin the Lord gives ſuch ſpeciall warning to his Church to take heed. For howſoever they had by fits moſt excellent motions, and purpoſes, yea and oftentimes notable beginnings and ſhewes of religion and reformation, in taking away al things that might anger the Lord, upon their new deliverances, and the new mercies which god gave unto them; yet ever and anon they turned backe, from the covenant of the Lord, *dealt falſly like their fathers, and turned like a deceitfull bow*, as the Lord complaines of their forefathers, ſhewing that this was an hereditarie ſinne. We may ſee how juſtly the Lord complaines on them for this. Firſt, after the daies of *Ahaz*, in the very beginning of the reigne of worthy *Hezekiah*, when God had humbled them by their enemies, for their Idolatrie, and now raiſed up that renowned *Hezekiah*, to be a deliverer, to reforme religion, and to take away the abominations: oh what a zeale was there then amongſt them? what flocking was there to Ieruſalem from all parts? what diligence in the Prieſts and Levites, for the purging of the Temple, reſtoring all the ordinances of the Lord, to their firſt glory, as that worthy Paſſeover, in the beginning of the reigne of *Hezekiah*, doth beare witneſſe? what praiſes were then ſounded out unto the heavenly Majeſtie? what joy was there amongſt them in all parts? what an indignation againſt the abominations chiefly in deſtroying utterly all Idolatrie and the monuments thereof in every place? that a man would have thought that they would never have fallen from the Lord againe. But alas this their goodneſſe was but as the morning dew, for preſently they decline to their old courſes againe, notwithſtanding the good king and all the paines of the faithfull

faithfull Prophets; and when the Lord takes away his good ſervant *Hezekiah*, and ſends them in his ſtead *Manaſſes*, they are as ready to receive Idolatry, and ſet it up againe with all kinde of abominations, as ever they were to deface it, and as forward to deſtroy Gods religion.

For they were as readie to deface Gods religion and to receive Idolatrie in the daies of *Manaſſes*.

So likewiſe in the reformation of that holy *Ioſiah*, after the judgement upon *Manaſſes*, and upon wicked *Ammon*, and the ſlaverie that came upon them for their ſinne, it is ſtrange to ſee againe their forwardneſſe, in the deſtroying of all the abominations, and in reſtoring of Gods pure worſhip, we may wonder at their zeale and ſubmiſſion unto the Lord and his covenant, at leaſt in ſhew, becauſe of their good king, through whom they were kept, that they did not outwardly and openly turne away from the Lord all his daies: yet they preſently declined in their hearts unto all kinde of abominations, and practiſed them ſecretly, ſo farre as they were not reſtrained by that worthy *Ioſiah* and their good lawes. Whereupon are all the complaints of the Prophets, and the denunciations of Gods vengeance againſt them, for that they were not upright, but ſtill were declining in their hearts, and ſo fell away more and more, untill the utter deſolation came. So that that complaint of the Lord by the Prophet *Eſay*, was ever moſt juſt againſt them; wherein he cals heaven and earth to witneſſe againſt them, thus expoſtulating with them in an holy indignation: *Ah ſinfull nation, a people loaden with iniquitie, a ſeed of the wicked corrupt children, they have forſaken the Lord, they have provoked the holy one of Iſrael to anger!* And why doth he thus grievouſly charge them? Why? becauſe, ſaith he, they have gone backward. And in the next verſe he asketh, *why they ſhould be ſmitten any more, ſeeing they fell away more and more*; and ſith that all his judgements could doe them no good to reclaime them, though there was no place free from thoſe judgements of God, from wounds and ſores, even from the top to the toe. And tels them, that continuing in their going backwards, all their outward ſervice was in vaine, untill they turned unfainedly unto him. And therefore in ſtead of ſmiting them any more with leſſer rods, he threatneth (even in the daies of *Ioſiah*) *that he would ſurely deſtroy all things from off*

So in *Ioſiahs* reformation, even as in that of *Hezekiah*, to deſtroy that Idolatrie, and to ſet up Gods religion againe.

2 *Chr* 34.7,8,9.
*Verſ.*31.
*Verſ.*32.
*Verſ.*33.
Yet preſently declining in their hearts.

Eſayes complaint ever true.

Eſay 1.2.
*Verſ.*4.

*Verſ.*5.

Verſ. 11,12,13.

*Zeph.*1.2.

Vers. 6.

off the earth, and so would visit them that were turned backe from the Lord.

But to passe over this point, to leave the application unto our selves kow it hath beene with us, and whether the Lord may not as justly complaine upon us for the same, and so leave us, not to smite us any more with his fatherly rods, but utterly forsake us; we will come more particularly to see whither they fell departing from the Lord and his Covenant.

Abomination 28.

Falling from their forwardnesse in Religion to all profanenesse.

TO come particularly to see whither they fell departing from the Lord.

First, they fell ever and anon from all true love of Religion, and from all conscience and obedience to the word, to all irreligiousnesse and profane contempt of the Lord.

Covenant. To magnifie and to obey the word of the Lord. *Exod.* 19. 5. *Deut.* 5. 2. This was as it were the sum of the Covenant. *Deut.* 29. 9, 12, 13, 14, 16.

Covenant.] Though this was a principall part of the Covenant of the Lord, which he propounded unto them, when he tooke them out of all the world, to be his only people; and as it were, the summe of all which is set downe in these words: *Now therefore if you will heare my voice indeed, and keepe my covenant, then shall you be my chiefe treasure above all people, though all the earth be mine, ye shall be also unto me a kingdome of Priests, and a holy nation.*

Dent. 4. 6, 7.

This Covenant they entered into for themselves, and for all their posteritie. And this was all that he required of them for all his benefits, to heare and to obey. To this also he had made all his promises: yea, it was indeed their glory before all people. And finally, this was that Covenant, which they now renewed in *Iosiahs* daies. This word of the Lord therefore, ought to have beene pretious, it only ought to have beene magnified amongst them and obeied in all things.

They did cast away the word of the Lord, for making any conscience of it.

Transgression.] Yet they came to this passe, that they would take no heed to the Law, nor to the words of the Lord, as he

he complaines by *Ieremie* and all other the Prophets, which lived at that time. But they uſed to caſt away the word, as a matter leaſt to be regarded, and moſt needleſſe of all other. Every man would follow his owne imaginations, even that way which himſelfe thought beſt. They would come for a faſhion to heare, even untill the day of their utter deſolation, as they did to heare *Ezekiel*, but it was but only to heare, and for that it was their cuſtome, but not with any purpoſe to amend any thing that was amiſſe. Whereupon the Lord ſeemes to be grieved, that ever he writ and gave them his word: for thus he ſpeakes complaining of them, for this their profane contempt of it: *Loe certainly in vaine made he it*, [to wit, his Law.] *The pen of the Scribes is in vaine*, [meaning, that they writ it in vaine, ſeeing that no body regarded it.] And then the Lord addes, *They have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wiſdome is in them?* And in the 6. of *Ieremie*, complaining of the deſpiſing of his Prophets (whereof we heard before) thus the Lord laments their eſtate: *The bellowes are burnt, the lead is conſumed in the fire, the founder melteth in vaine, for the wicked are not taken away*, [meaning that all the preaching of Gods word was utterly loſt, in regard of the multitude.] As the Prophet *Eſay* complaines concerning his owne preaching, *that he had laboured in vaine, and ſpent his ſtrength in vaine.* The Lord alſo himſelfe ſaith, concerning his owne paines, *That he had ſtretched out his hands in vaine, unto a rebellious and gainſaying people, which walked ſtill in a way which was not good.* He ſhewes alſo by *Ieremie*, the manner of their gain-ſaying: *That he ſpake unto them when they were in their proſperitie, but they uſed to anſwer, I will not heare.* This had beene their continuall cuſtome. Thus did they caſt off the word and Covenant of the Lord. Only ſometimes by ſtarts, as we ſaw, would they heare a little, and ſeeke the Lord, but preſently after, fall away, that in the end they came to deſpiſe the word, ſo as not to be moved by it; no, not in their afflictions and dangers, but ſtill following each one their owne imaginations: that *Zedekiah* the king himſelfe durſt not be knowne to inquire of the word of the Lord, or that he conſulted with his true and faithfull Prophet.

Ieremie.6.9.
Ieremie.6.16.
Verſ.19.

Ezek.33.31.

Jerem.8.8.
The Lord is grieved that ever he gave his word to them that regarded it not.

Ieremie.6.29.

Eſay 49.4.

Eſay 65.2.

Jerem.22.21.

Ieremie.6.6.

Ieremie.37.17, 38.

Vengeance.] The vengeance threatned for this is moſt righteous:

Vengeance.

The plague upon them that cast away Gods word to set up their owne imaginations. *Ierem.6.19.*

ous: for as they preferred their own imaginations before his heavenly word and wisdome; so he tels them, that he would *cause a plague to come upon them, even the fruit of their own imaginations.* And what was that plague? *Surely that he would lay stumbling blocks in their waies to cause them to fall:* the very devices of their own hearts, unto which he would give them up, and their counsels, and examples to incourage and harden one another in their evill waies, should be the cause of the ruine of them all. The father should be the cause of the destruction of his sonne, and the neighbour of his neighbour. And so should all be made a prey to the common enemies of the Church, the Babylonians and others, for thus casting away the word of the Lord, and for setting up their own wisdome in the place thereof. And then when that day of vengeance came, the wisest should be afraid and ashamed, when they should see that wisdome of their own, for which they had cast away the word and wisdome of the only wise God, to be starke madnesse, and that they had in them no wisdome at all, no, no sparke of true wisdome. When they should behold their wives and their fields given to others, and the Lord utterly casting them off, for thus casting away his wisdome. Yea further, the Lord foretels them, that he would openly cast them off for this, as that men [even the very enemies] *should call them reprobate silver*; because the Lord had rejected them as counterfet children, pretending and making a shew to be his, and to have his stampe, when indeed they were none of his; seeming to be silver, when they were nothing but brasse and iron. The same Prophet *Ieremy* also denounceth in another place, that for this sin, the desolation of Ierusalem should be so great, that other nations should say every one unto his neighbour; *Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this great citie?* And that the very Heathens themselves should be able to answer this wonder thus: *Because they have forsaken the Covenant of the Lord their God, and worshipped other gods and served them:* for thus they did worship, as we heard, in the daies of Idolatrie, and in the best daies still, many of them secretly, and evermore, every one of them setting up their owne imaginations, and worshipping them, and so casting away the word and Covenant of the Lord. Finally, the Prophet *Zacharie* declares, that they themselves were driven to

Ierem.6.22.

Ierem.8.9. The day shall come when they who have cast away Gods word shall see they have had no wisdome in them.

Ierem.6.30. The Lord will reject all those who reject his word, as reprobate silver. *Vers.28.* *Ierem.22.8.*

All they forsake the Covenant who doe not obey it, though they seeme in word to embrace it.

confesse

confeſſe this in the Captivitie and after, *That that word of the Lord had taken hold upon them, even that which before they would not heare. Howſoever the Prophets were dead,* which denounced it; *yet the vengeance did fully take hold upon them* for their contemning it, as the Lord had threatned.

All deſpiſers ſhall one day confeſſe the righteouſneſſe of the Lord. *Zach.1.4. Verſ.5. Verſ.6. Triall.*

Application.] Now to omit the triall of this, whether we be not guiltie hereof, and whether we be not therefore in danger of the ſame vengeance: when all men ſee, that ſo many of us doe receive the word of the Lord only for a faſhion, and becauſe that the law of the Land is ſo: for where is the man almoſt to be found, in moſt congregations, that makes any conſcience of it, to be guided by it in all things? but every one following his owne imaginations, and what way he thinkes beſt in his owne heart, at leaſt in matters that neerely concerne his credit and commoditie, or ſo conſtruing and framing the word, as to ſerve his affections.

Application to al whoſe hearts tell us that we are ſuch.

To come unto us all whoſe hearts do tell us that we are ſuch, as ſo receive the word; or that we are they who are ſo farre off from magnifying the good word of the Lord to heare it, and to obey it for his cauſe alone, as that we rather account moſt baſely of it, and not worth the hearing, but only for that the law and cuſtome is ſo: Or who thus ſpeak and even proclaime in all our practiſes, that we will not be controuled, but we will doe as we ſee beſt. Let me demand of all ſuch, ſuch only I ſay, and that in the name of the Lord, that it may be a meanes to awake you at length: Why will you not ſee the righteous vengeance of the Lord how heavily it is upon you? how he hath caſt theſe ſtumbling blocks in your waies, to turne you out of his good way, and to throw you headlong to deſtruction? That every one of you ſhould ſet up your owne imaginations to cauſe you to fall, and every one to be the ruine of his neighbours and followers? Would you, that the Lord ſhould ſtill increaſe this judgement upon you, multiplying firſt theſe ſtumbling blocks in your waies, to give you up wholly to your owne imaginations, ſo from thence to vile affections, and even to a reprobate ſenſe almoſt void of all perceiving of ſinne, or of any conſcience, to be filled in the end with all iniquitie? For this you know is Gods moſt righteous and terrible proceeding with the very

Rom.1.21. Verſ.24. Verſ.26. Verſ.28.

Rom.1.21, &c.

Gentiles, and therefore much more with thoſe who make a profeſſion of his Covenant; as it is too apparant in multitudes at this day, who ſometimes have ſeemed to make conſcience of the good waies and word of the Lord. Would you be every one hardned by others, and every of you be a cauſe to harden others, ſo every one to fall and periſh by others, and each to be made a prey to the common enemie, as this people was? Would you have your wives and your children, your houſes and your lands to be given to your enemies, as he threatneth in his Law, if he ſhould caſt off the protection of us, like as your ſinnes doe ſtrive for the ſame? Would yee have this glorious Nation to be accounted of all the enemies as counterfeit and reprobate ſilver, a Nation rejected of the Lord, for all our enemies to wonder at, and your ſelves to acknowledge too late, the Lord to be righteous in all that he hath brought upon us, ſeeing (as was ſaid) you by your ſinnes ſo contend thereunto? Finally, if yet the Lord cannot move you hereby, for to each of you hee ſpeakes particularly, as if he ſhould call you by name; let yet but this one thing enter into your hearts, and it will pierce your very ſoules: That the day will come, when, will you, nill you, you muſt heare the voice of the Lord, and that in ſuch ſort, as you would give ten thouſand worlds, if you had them, that you might never heare it. When the very firſt ſound of it ſhall ſmite you into endleſſe horror and ſhivering, and when you ſhall fall at it, and never after be able to ariſe, nor ever have the hideous noiſe of it out of your eares, even for this, that you would not hearken unto it in time. Remember but the Majeſtie of that terrible voice at the giving of the Law, and when yet the Lord ſpake in mercie and love, about to make his Covenant with his people. Call but to remembrance the running away, and the flying of the people from it, their horror and dread, their crying that if they heard his voice any more, they were but dead men! Or but even call to minde the majeſtie of the voice of our Lord and Saviour, when he was in his greateſt humilitie and abaſing in the garden, and his enemies in their triumph, and withall, that he ſaid no more unto them, but that he was that Ieſus of Nazareth whom they ſought: and how at that voice, which then might iuſtly have ſeemed ſo weake, yet they went back-

backward and fell to the ground, not able to ſtand.

Or to conclude, remember but that voice and that flaſh of light, which caſt perſecuting and raging *Saul* to the earth; which ſmit him as dead, made him to lie trembling and quaking, when he was in his chiefeſt ruffe; and then judge in your ſelves, what ſhall become upon you, when you ſhall heare this voice, and how ſhrill and terrible it ſhall be. That voice that ſhall awake out of the very duſt of the earth, all thoſe, who have ſlept from the beginning of the world, and which ſhall bring all before the judgement ſeat. Oh thinke all yee deſpiſers of the ſweet voice of Ieſus Chriſt, what ſhall be your caſe then, when you ſhall heare the ſound of that his moſt righteous ſentence! *Goe yee accurſed into everlaſting fire prepared for the devill and his angels.* Which voice ſhall caſt you into that eternall burning with the rich Glutton, where there is nothing but howling, and weeping, and gnaſhing of teeth. Wherein you may crie, that Ieſus Chriſt would heare you, but you ſhall never be heard. When you would wiſh to heare againe, but one of the meaneſt ſermons that ever was preached unto you, and account it more worth than all that ever you enjoyed in the earth; if you could by it obtaine but one only drop of mercy, though it were but as a drop of water upon the tip of the finger (of any one of the pooreſt and contemtibleſt of thoſe whom here you have deſpiſed) to coole your tongues therewith. Remember that Glutton, that enſample is written to give you warning. And together with all theſe, remember that ſweet ſpeech of the Lord; *Therefore whileſt it is called to day, if you ſhall heare his voice.* Exhort, provoke and incite every one one another, to heare that heavenly voice, yet is the day of mercy, yet is the day of ſalvation, yet is the acceptable time, whilſt he cals us to heare. It may be this ſhall be his laſt tender call unto thee, before the doore of mercy be ſhut, and that thou heare that terrible voice. Thou muſt certainly heare it, though thou wert in the depth of the earth, or in the bottome of the ſea; nothing can keepe thee from the ſhrill ſound of it. He therfore that hath an eare, let him at leaſt begin now to heare, whileſt our moſt gracious Saviour ſtretcheth forth his hands in ſuch mercy and compaſſion, calling all to heare, and to become hence-forward ordinary and obedient hearers of his word.

Hebr. 3. 13. 2 *Cor.* 7. 1.

And thus we ſee cleerely herein alſo, what need all Gods ſervants have to hold up their hands to turne away the vengeance threatned, and hard at the doores for our ſo baſe account of the word of the Lord, and what need every contemner of his word hath, to heare whilſt he may, yea, to crie and call day and night for forgiveneſſe hereof, whilſt mercie may be had. And ſo what juſt cauſe every one hath to watch and to pray.

Abomination 29.

Scorning the word of the Lord and all true profeſſion, haſtening the Captivitie.

ANother degree of their profaneneſſe herein was this, That they fell to ſcorne the word of the Lord, and all that made conſcience of it for the very words ſake.

Covenant. How pretious Gods word ought to be to his people. Pſal. 119. Matth. 11. 29.

Covenant.] Whereas the word of the Lord ſhould have been moſt pretious unto them, as the Manna from heaven, and above that corruptible food, even as the bread of life, and as the water of life; ſo that they ſhould with holy *Iob*, have accounted it above their appointed food; and as *David*, dearer than thouſands of gold and ſilver. And whereas they ſhould have eſteemed the commandement, as the ſweet and eaſie yoke of Ieſus Chriſt, that brings eternall reſt to the ſoules of all that take it upon them, and in a word their honour and prerogative above all nations, as we have ſeene, they did cleane contrary.

Tranſgreſſiõ.

Tranſgreſſion.] For they came not only to that paſſe, that they would not heare ſo as to obey, for that had beene a leſſe iniquitie, but moreover to a loathing of it, as their forefathers in the wilderneſſe did that Manna ſent from heaven. And more than that alſo, to account it *a burden, a wearineſſe* & a trouble. Yea, which was yet more to anger the Lord to the uttermoſt, they made his word a matter of ſcorne and reproch, yea of the vileſt hatred, and even as a curſe amongſt them: for their loathing of it, if it was ſincerely preached, we ſaw before in their dealing with the true Prophets. We will therefore inſiſt only vpon the other two points, and firſt how they accounted it a burden.

The

The Lord complaines grievouſly of this ſinne, how they tooke up this cuſtome amongſt them concerning the faithfull preaching of all the true Prophets, to aske ſcoffingly, what is the burden of the Lord. Thus making a ſcorne of all the right diſcoverie of their ſinnes, and the ſound denuntiation of Gods judgements, calling it by the name of a burden. The Lord chargeth them moſt ſeverely, that they ſhould not uſe that diſdainfull ſpeech any more. He tels them how they had perverted and abuſed the holy word of the everliving God, the Lord of hoaſts: and withall directs them what phraſe of ſpeech they ſhould uſe, when they ſpake of his word ſent unto them by his true Prophets. That thus each ſhould demand in reverence of his Majeſtie, *What hath the Lord anſwered, or what hath the Lord ſpoken?* and to leave off thoſe reprochfull taunting termes, *What is the burden of the Lord?* or otherwiſe he would ſurely be avenged of them for this ſin, as we ſhall ſee in the denuntiation following.

They accounted Gods word a burden. *Ier.* 23. 33, 34, 35. *Verſ.* 33.

Verſ. 36. *How to ſpeake with reverence of the word of the Lord.*

Verſ. 35.

Verſ. 33.

Secondly, they did not only pervert and miſcall the holy word it ſelfe in this ſcornfull manner, but alſo made it a matter of the vileſt reproch to every one that did ſo deliver it and handle it faithfully, as appeares after. Though they were ſuch men as the world was not worthy of, ſuch as whoſe converſation none of them could ſtaine, yet this very word made them to be ſcorned, hated, railed upon, and curſed, if they profeſſed it boldly and ſincerely; and to have their owne friends againſt them as the wickedeſt creatures of the earth. The Lord hath cauſed a notable preſident of this ſinne, to be inrolled in his booke for all poſteritie to behold, and to take warning even in poore *Ieremy*; and that every man may ſee his righteous proceeding in their captivitie, for this abomination. *I am in deriſion daily*, ſaith the Prophet; *every one mocketh me.* And why? Why ſaith the Prophet, *the word of the Lord was made a reproch unto me and in deriſion daily.* As if he ſhould ſay; I am reproched and derided only for the word of the Lord, for my plaine and bold preaching, and confident avouching of it; for otherwiſe I doe nothing in the world, juſtly to offend any man. But ſaith he, *ſince I ſpake I cried out of wrong and proclaimed deſolation,* [I have told all ſorts of their ſinnes, and the Lords heavie judgements prepared, as he hath charged me; unleſſe I would have him *to deſtroy me*

2. They made the word matter enough of the vileſt reproch to every one truly profeſſing.

Ieremy a Preſident. *Ier.* 20. 7.

Ier. 1. 17.

before their faces.] And therefore the word of the Lord is made a reproach unto me, I am in derision daily. Therefore only is it that every one mockes me, every one hates me, yea every body curseth mee, and mine owne friends are against mee; because so long as I have a mouth to speake, I cannot, I dare not but discover their iniquities, for which the Lord is angred, and denounce his judgements faithfully. I dare not mince his Word, nor dally with it as others doe, handling it deceitfully, nor be any companion with them.

Ierem. 15. 17.

The feavefull extremities that Gods deareſt ſervants are oft driven to through the hatred they endure for the Word.

Into what extremities this did drive the poore servant of the Lord we saw in part before, in the manner of their receiving the true Prophets. How he crieth out of the time that ever he was borne (as *Iob* did in the greatnesse of his miseries and temptations) thus lamenting: *Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of contention, one that striveth with the whole earth. I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury, yet every body curseth mee.* And in the twentieth Chapter hee fals out in his exceeding weaknesse, for the grievousnesse of his temptation, to expostulate with the Lord himselfe in much impatience thus; Oh Lord thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived [or enticed] for that being stronger, he had prevailed and inforced him to speake what he did. And thirdly, it made him to come to this resolution to say, *That he would not make any more mention of him, nor speake any more in his name.* He would not so much as warne them any more in the name of the Lord, but he would leave off his preaching, or at least-wise, that his plaine kinde of preaching, wherein he was wont to rebuke their sinnes without respect of persons: that whereby hee separated the pretious from the vile; teaching truth, rejecting falshood, as God himselfe, for which alone he had purchased all his disgrace and hatred.

Verſ. 10.

Ierem. 20. 7.

Verſ. 8.

Verſ. 9.

Ierem. 15. 19.

This hee had indeed left off, but that the Word in his heart was as a burning fire, so that he could not forbeare. Lastly, besides all other extremities, it driveth him to this, that he could scarcely come into any company, because there were every where some scorners of all religion and true godlinesse, and of himselfe especially for the Word. Some that maligned him, and would be readie to catch advantage of his words, to wrast

Ierem. 15. 17.

Ierem. 20. 10.

and

and pervert them, ſo to complaine of him to bring him into danger. Whereupon he was driven ordinarily to ſit penſively all alone, as a poore melancholy perſon, forſaken of men, even for this contumely, and for that the Lord did ſeeme to fill him with indignation, by this generall oppoſition and hatred for the words ſake. Neither could he have any comfort or joy at all, nor any meanes to ſupport and uphold him in the truth, more than that the word of the Lord was the rejoycing of his heart: and that the Lord who was with him as a mightie Giant, did comfort and ſtrengthen him by the conſolations of his ſpirit.

Ier. 18.18. *Ier.* 15.16,17. The Prophet driven to ſit all alone for this plague. Deſtitute of all comfort more than from the Lord. *Verſ.* 16. *Ier.* 20.11.

As it was with him for the words ſake only, ſo it was undoubtedly with every one cleaving unto him, and who was knowne to profeſſe the word in the ſame manner as he did. They muſt needs be all in the ſame hatred and diſgrace according to the meaſure of their ſinceritie, and witneſſing of the truth; even ſignes and wonders to all others, for the very name of the Lord of hoaſts: as the Prophet *Eſay* and all thoſe who beleeved by his miniſterie, more than that they were ſheltered by their good lawes, or by the countenance of ſome worthy ruler, or the like.

All his followers in the ſame hatred.

Eſa. 8.18.

Now all this the Lord by that his holy Prophet complaines of, as done only againſt his glorious Majeſtie, terming all ſuch ſcorners and deriders of his word and ſervants, no better than *Witches children, ſeede of the adulterer and of the Whore*: that is, ſuch as were not the children of *Abraham*, nor any of his owne begotten by his word and Spirit, but ſuch as forſooke God, and rather ſet up Sathan to be their father: and ſo walked in theſe evill waies of their perverſe forefathers. And then the Prophet deſcribing their behaviour towards his true ſervants, namely the cariage of thoſe who were given to Idolatrie, towards them; he asketh them upon whom they had jeſted, againſt whom they had gaped and thruſt out their tongues. As if the Lord ſhould have demanded this of them, whether they had done all this contumely unto his ſervants, or unto his owne Majeſtie, whether it was for their cauſe, or for his ſake, and for that care which they had to pleaſe him.

Eſa. 57.3.

See the cariage and condition of all ſcorners. *Verſ.* 4.

Vengeance] The vengeance which the Lord denounceth for this ſinne is moſt terrible: for firſt whereas they called his word ſcoffingly, *The burden of the Lord*; the Lord tels them, that

Vengeance. *Ierem.* 23.36. The very ſcornes and

taunts againſt Gods word and ſervants ſhall be a heavy burden to everie ſcorner one day.

* My iniquitie is greater than can be pardoned. *Gen.* 4. 13. *Ierem.* 23. 34. *Hearken you ſcorners, God wil viſit every one of you and your houſes. Verſ.* 33. 39.

All ſuch muſt be rewarded with an everlaſting ſhame. Verſ. 20. *Eſay* 57. 19, 20, 21.

And never have peace day nor night, but be as the raging ſea.

How vile are our termes againſt religion and pietie.

that ſame Ironicall and taunting ſpeech, whereby they did thus diſdainfully ſcorne his glorious Majeſty and his word, that ſame ſhould be a burden to every one who had ſo uſed it. A burden, which beſides all other their miſeries for it, ſhould one day lie heavier upon their conſciences, than if they had the whole earth upon them. A burden that ſhould cauſe them to crie out with *Cain*, * *My puniſhment is greater than I can beare*, yea, a burden cruſhing them under Gods vengeance, and preſſing them to the pit of deſpaire, and to the very bottome of hell: for undoubtedly, all theſe came upon every one of them that did not repent. And ſecondly, the Lord tels them, *that hee would ſurely viſit every ſuch a one and his houſe*; he would plague the very houſes of all ſuch.

And thirdly, as hereby they deſired to forget the word, that they might heare of it no more; ſo *he would forget and forſake them, and the Citie that he gave them and their fathers, and caſt them out of his preſence*. Finally, for that reproach and ſhame which they ſought to caſt upon him and upon his word, hee would bring *an everlaſting reproach upon them, and a perpetuall ſhame which ſhould never be forgotten*. Thus alſo we know it came to paſſe. And to conclude, in that 57. Chapter of *Eſay* verſe 19. the Lord denounceth that whereas hee created his word (which he there cals the fruit of the lips) to be peace to all ſorts who had grace to receive it, to fill their hearts with all heavenly conſolation, in the aſſurance of the pardon of their ſinnes, yet there ſhould be no peace to the wicked, ſuch as were thoſe prophane ſcorners, but they ſhould be like the raging ſea that cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt continually. They ſhould not have any peace at all, any more for ever.

Application.] To returne unto our ſelves, if yet it may pleaſe the Higheſt to worke any repentance or remorſe in any of our hearts. Oh that this ſinne did not ſhew it ſelfe much more openly, than the Sunne at noone daies! That it did not declare it ſelfe impudently above the ſinne of Sodome! For what ſmall Village is there, where there are not ſome, if not many, who doe not only account the Word a burden, but which moreover doe not eſteeme all care and conſcience to obey it, as a thing moſt odious of all other, terming all true love and conſcionable obe-

dience

dience of it, by moſt diſgracefull names, which may make our very hearts to bleed! Who is there that can once deny (if hee have any knowledge of the world) that there is any thing growne more reproachfull in moſt places, than this holy care ſo to profeſſe and obey the word of the Lord, and to walke conſcionably in all his good waies? Is it not become a matter of as great diſgrace, ignominie and hatred, to exceeding many, as ever it was to *Ieremie?* I appeale to the experience of every one of you, who have given your hearts unto the Lord, and have ſet your faces to walke the high and narrow way towards the heavenly Ieruſalem; unleſſe the Lord have kept you from this vexation, by the greatneſſe of your place, or ſome ſuch like ſhelter, or live in ſome of thoſe few places in the Land which the Lord hath more ſpecially bleſſed and guarded with his protection in this behalfe: yea, though you have never medled at all with any matter of controverſie, but only have ſtriven to be blameleſſe in the world, as poore *Ieremie* did.

But to leave this point to the ſorrow of our hearts, as being too palpaple, and which was alſo touched before; and to returne to all thoſe who thus baſely account of the word of the Lord, and thinke the ſincere profeſſion of it the greateſt matter of reproach. Yee that ſpeake ſo diſdainfully of the good wayes of God, who make it your felicitie to revile and raile upon all who ſo ſerve him: that uſe them as they uſed *Ieremie*, or worſe; not fearing what notorious ſlanders you raiſe upon them for their love to his word. You that care not how you vex their ſoules, to what extremities you drive them, becauſe that good word which they obey, is ſuch a yoke and a burden, which you will not endure. Will you needs pull upon your conſciences this heavie burden of ſcorning the Lord? Doe you long to feele the weight of his wrath, to cruſh you, and to preſſe you into the bottomleſſe lake of his vengeance, to make you to crie out with *Cain*, *My puniſhment is greater than I can beare?* Is there no other remedie but you will needs provoke him, not only to plague your ſelves, but your houſes, even the places where you live, where your blaſphemies are uttered? Can nothing ſtay you, but you will needs hale an everlaſting ſhame and reproach upon the Nation, your deare Countrey, which hath

Application to all who account ſo baſely of the Word.

Whether they will draw this burden upon their conſciences.

Vpon their houſes.

And an everlaſting ſhame upon the Nation their deare Countrey.

hath bred and brought you up, even upon us all; which was almost done; according to that shame which you have cast upon the Lord: who yet hitherto hath spared you at the instant cries of his servants? Will yee not understand, nor so much as heare the Lord asking you, *against whom yee have jested, upon whom yee have gaped, and thrust out your tongues?* Whether against the poore soules labouring to obey the word of the Lord, or against the Lord himselfe? Will nothing make you perceive how the Lord accounts all those as witches children, and none of his, which use to scorne at him? He reputes all such as the seed of the adulterer and of the whore: for such rebellion is as the sinne of witchcraft. How can you possibly be his children, whom you scorne to the face, and jest at daily? How should it be that ever you should escape his vengeance, but that all these plagues must needs come upon you? Can you imagine that that word of his which you have so scorned, can ever bring any peace unto you, but horror and dread? Can it be any thing but a sword to runne thorow your hearts, and to cause you through the horror of the wound and anguish thereof, never to have rest day nor night, but be as the raging sea casting out mire and dirt, blasphemies and cursings of your selves, with voices of hideous despaire and howlings for evermore? Be warned by them who have felt some pangs hereof, and such as a wise man would not feele for all the world, though they never committed the least part of your sinnes. Happie, and ten thousand times happy were you, if your eies could be opened, but to see your present estate, and what you are haling upon your selves and upon us all so fast as you can. The Lord of hosts hath spoken it, he will fulfill it, either in your repentance, or in his most righteous vengeance.

And not understand on whom they have jested. *Esay* 57. 3,4.

Not perceiving whose children the Lord accounts them. 1 *Sam.* 15.23.

Scorning Gods word and faithfull messengers cannot possibly escape unpunished.

Nor have peace by the word, but horror.

Happie if they could see this in time.

Conclusion.

And thus herein we see againe what cause we have for this scorning sinne to watch and to pray, lest the Lord so make us a perpetuall scorne and reproach as we had almost beene. And also what need every such a scorner hath to repent and to crie out for mercie, before it be too late, when the vengeance is come.

Thus have we had these two maine heads of their Apostasie, their falling away from their love and obedience of the word, and casting away in the end the word of the Lord; and secondly their scorning and hating of it. Now how was it possible, but

These the chiefe heads of their apostasie.

from

from theſe two muſt needs flow all kinde of prophaneneſſe to anger the Lord? I will a little inſiſt upon ſome few of the principall parts of the ſame their prophaneneſſe. Let us only in reading apply the Lords voice unto our ſelves, and conſider to whom the holy Ghoſt now ſpeaketh. And firſt we will begin with the Sabbaths of the Lord, how they fell to the polluting thereof.

From whence all their prophaneneſſe did grow.

Abomination 30.

Pollution of the Lords Sabbaths, haſtening the Captivitie.

Covenant.

Covenant] Whereas the Lord had done this for them: He had given unto this people only, his Sabbaths, as a ſigne that he was their God that did ſanctifie them, he had alſo vouchſafed it unto them as a ſolemne holy-day, to declare to them his love and care over them; a day wherein hee did in a ſpeciall manner hold forth and offer unto them his holy things, as his Word, Sacraments, and all other his ſpirituall and heavenly riches. He had ordained it as a principall meanes of their ſanctification and ſalvation, and for an entrance into the eternall Sabbath: And alſo a day which hee had appointed, that they and every one of them that were his people, ſhould profeſſe their faith, love, and obedience to his heavenly Majeſtie; and thereupon had charged them to remember this above all, ſaying, *Remember the Sabbath day to keepe it holy.* And finally, whereas he had required this of them, as they would enjoy his favour and all his bleſſings, to *make his Sabbath a day of delight, to conſecrate it as a glorious day unto his Highneſſe, not doing their owne waies, nor ſeeking their owne wils, nor ſpeaking a vaine word*; thus turning their foot from every kinde of prophanation of the Sabbath. And had promiſed that then they ſhould finde true delight in the Lord, and be honoured above all other people, to be alſo fed with the inheritance of *Iacob.* They ſhould then have enjoyed both the earthly and the heavenly Canaan for an everlaſting inheritance. And unto every particular man that thus ſhould ſet his heart to ſanctifie the Sabbath,

Eſay 58. 13. He is a bleſſed man that thus endevoureth to keepe the Sabbaths, and to ſuch a man only the Covenant and Promiſes belong. Eſay 56. 2, 3, 8.

Sabbath, the Lord had promiſed peculiar bleſſings to incourage them; that though they were ſtrangers, yet they ſhould have a place above the ſonnes and daughters of *Abraham*, which were ſo only according to the fleſh; even an everlaſting name and an eternall joy.

Eſay 56.2,3,4,5, 6, 7.

Tranſgreſſio. *Ezek.* 22.8. They deſpiſed and polluted Gods Sabbath. *Verſ.* 25.

Tranſgreſſion.] They cleane contrarily deſpiſed thoſe holy things of the Lord offered that day unto them, and polluted his Sabbaths, as he complaineth by *Ezekiel*, yea, the Lord chargeth this upon them, that *there was a generall conſpiracie of their Prieſts*, to continue in this horrible iniquitie, and all other their evill wayes: for ſo he ſaith, that *their Prieſts brake his law*, [they who ſhould above all other people, and of all other things have carefully looked to ſee his Sabbaths ſanctified, his worſhip religiouſly performed, his holy things reverently handled; they defiled theſe his holy things, handling them moſt unreverently and prophanely.] *They put no difference betweene the holy and prophane, neither diſcerned betweene the uncleane and the cleane*: meaning, as ſeemeth, that all were alike to them to be admitted to the holy things of God: dogs or ſwine, as our Saviour ſpeaketh. They gave, as it appeareth evidently by theſe words, the holy things indifferently to all, when they put no difference, nor did diſcerne betweene them, no not of the uncleane nor moſt prophane ſinners, not of thoſe who ſhould not have ſet their foot within the Temple of the Lord, untill they had been cleanſed, much leſſe have communicated with them in thoſe holy things of God; which *Hezekiah* and *Ioſiah* reformed, cauſing them to be kept forth. But theſe it appeareth were commonly the fitteſt and the beſt liked of all other: for they generally *hated the good, loved the evill, juſtified the wicked, condemned the innocent*. None were odious but *Eſay*, *Amos*, *Ieremie*, *Micah*, and thoſe who would tell them of their ſinnes, and ſuch as followed them, whom they accounted monſters, becauſe they obeyed the true Prophets, and the word of the Lord, and would have no confederacie with the reſt in their abominations. And therefore if any were driven out from the Temple and the ſacred priviledges of it, and that great cenſure of excommunication inflicted on them, it muſt needs be thoſe, who were ſmitten, impriſoned, and glad to flie for their lives, as *Ieremie*, *Baruch*,

Verſ. 26. They put no difference betweene the holy and prophane. *Matth.* 7.6. *Ezek.* 22.26. *Numb.* 9.6. *Ezra* 6.21. *Pſal.* 50.16, 17, &c.

2 *Chron.* 23.19. 2 *Chron.* 35.15. *Micah* 3.2. *Eſay* 5.20, 23.

Eſay 8.12.18.

ruch, and *Vriah*, and such as they, like as it was after in the time of our Saviour.

Iohn 9.22, 35.

The Lord moreover complaines of them in that place of *Ezekiel*, that *the Priests hid their eyes from his Sabbaths*. [They were afraid to see, lest they should put a difference betweene the holy and prophane: lest they should behold perfectly and fully, the speciall duties which God required at their hands on the Sabbaths, and the holy manner of the performance of them; or be enforced to urge the people to the strict observation of the duties, which the Lord then required of them. They hid their eyes lest they should see the abominations commited that day, to crie out against them as God had bidden, and to see them reformed; either they saw them not, or else would not see them. They cared not so long as they might lie and sleepe, and play the good fellowes, or heape up abundance, and all the people to magnifie them. They would be sure to offend no body by telling any of their sins, but get the good will of all, by crying peace, and daubing their consciences with untempered morter, as was shewed.] Whereupon the Lord so further complains, that hee was prophaned amongst them, which must needs be, when all were admitted alike to those sacred rites. They were handled and used indifferently by all, contrary to his expresse ordinance; that all shame and dishonor was cast upon him that day, in stead of that honour which should have beene done to his Majestie. Whereby all might see that they declared their prophane contempt of the Lords ordinantes openly, and that they were not to be regarded more than for fashion sake.

Ezek. 22.26. *The Priests hid their eyes from Gods Sabbath.*

Esay 56.10, 11.

Ezek. 22.28. *Marke how the Lord complaines that he is prophaned by them that willingly suffer his holy things to be polluted.*

Finally, they were so farre off from resting that day, as he had commanded, and from consecrating it to his service, and to those holy uses only, as a glorious day unto the Lord, that they would not cease from their servile labours, more than the Magistrates did restraine them by great hand; for howsoever they did refraine their ordinary callings and trades upon the Sabbath daies, and it is like that in Ierusalem their shop-windowes were shut up, (or else the Lord who chargeth them with the lesse, would have charged them with the greater) yet hee complaines of them, that they thought the times of their Sabbaths too long, as is shewed in *Amos*, for which a vengeance is threatned

Amos 8.35.10.

The Lord chargeth them with carrying and recarrying on the Sabbath *Ierem.17.21,22.*

ned against the Temple. The Lord also chargeth them more particularly, with this sin of carying and recarying in and out at the gates of Ieruſalem upon the Sabbath daies. This they did contrary to his expreſſe morall commandement, That they ſhould doe no manner of ſuch ſervile unneceſſary work upon that day; but themſelves and their ſervants ſhould keepe the Sabbaths, and their very cattell ſhould reſt. For this ſame ſin of carying and recarying on the Sabbath, which moſt make ſmall account of now adaies (though the commandement herein belong as well unto us, as unto them; for God wil have every one of us, as much as is poſſible, to doe our publike homage that day, and every one to uſe the meanes of our ſalvation, and will have compaſſion to be ſhewed to the poore ſervant, and even to the dumbe beaſt, as well now as then) for this ſin I ſay, the Lord commands the Prophet *Ieremie* to goe and ſtand in *the gate of the children of the people, whereby the Kings of Iudah came in, and by which they went out, and in all the gates of Ieruſalem.* And thus hee is bidden to ſpeake unto them all. He muſt ſpeak to the King himſelfe chiefly, as unto whom firſt and above all other, this charge was committed, as to the Lords Lieutenant; and with him to all Iudah, and to all the inhabitants of Ieruſalem that did enter in by thoſe gates; ſaying, *Heare yee the word of the Lord yee Kings of Iudah, and all Iudah, and all yee inhabitants of Ieruſalem that enter in by theſe gates. Thus ſaith the Lord, Take heed to your ſoules, and beare no burden on the Sabbath day, nor bring in by the gates of Ieruſalem; neither cary forth burdens out of your houſes upon the Sabbath day: neither doe yee any worke, but ſanctifie the Sabbath, as I commanded your Fathers.*

Fained neceſſities will not ſerve before the all-ſeeing God.

The Commandement belongs as well to us as to them.

Ierem.17.19.

The Lords anger for this ſin, and the meſſage ſent unto them for it, chiefly to the King and Rulers.

Verſ.20.

Verſ.25.

To take heed to their ſoules for this ſinne.

In which words the meaning of the Lord is cleare, that as they regarded their owne lives and the eſcaping of his vengeance, ſo they ſhould reforme this amongſt other their abominations; they ſhould not only reſt and keep holy the Sabbath themſelves, but every one ſhould ſee to it, that all within their gates, that is, within the authority and command of every ſeverall perſon, ſhould likewiſe keepe the Sabbath, each ſhould be inforced hereunto, and reſtrained from all prophanation thereof. And whereas they might ſay for themſelves, and anſwer unto the Prophet, that they did no otherwiſe than their Fathers had done,

The evill example of our forefathers is no warrant for us, but rather encreaſeth the wrath.

and

and yet their fore-fathers had not felt ſuch a deſolation as hee threatned, he is charged to tell them from the Lord, that he *had commanded their fathers otherwiſe; but they did not obey, neither incline their eares, but made their neckes ſtiffe, and would not heare nor receive his correction.* So that this was their fathers fearefull ſin, that they would not heare to ſee this reformed. And this in their fathers prepared their way and haſtened their threatned Captivitie. Yet nevertheleſſe if now at length they would heare before his vengeance was accompliſhed upon them, and would reforme this their ſin of thus prophaning the Sabbath, and doe no worke therin: then the Lord makes a gratious promiſe unto them, *that their Kings and Princes ſhould enter in at the gates of that Citie, and ſhould ſit upon the Throne of David, and ride upon chariots and horſes, both they and their Princes, the men of Iudah and the inhabitants of Ieruſalem, and that Citie ſhould remaine for ever. And they ſhould come from the Cities of Iudah, and from about Ieruſalem, and from the Land of Benjamin, and from the plaine, and from the mountaines, and from the South, which ſhould bring burnt offerings and ſacrifices, and meat-offerings and incenſe, and ſhould bring ſacrifice of praiſe unto the houſe of the Lord.*

The meaning of the Lord in thoſe words is moſt evident, that if they would reforme the abuſes of the Sabbath, and honour him by conſecrating it wholly unto him, then they ſhould enjoy their Kings, Princes and Nobles, and their Kings and Princes ſhould retaine their ancient honour above all Nations, and all of them generally ſhould enjoy their wonted peace and all proſperitie: And withall their free libertie of the Temple and of the ſervice of the Lord, which was their chiefe glory; yea they ſhould ſtill have all their dignitie and priviledges in as ample manner, as ever in former age. But on the contrarie, the Lord bids the Prophet to tell them plainly, *that if they would not heare him to ſanctifie his Sabbath, and not to beare a burden, nor goe thorow the gates of Ieruſalem in the Sabbath day*; [that is, if they would not lay aſide all ſervile workes on the Sabbath, and ſee all open pollutions and contempts of it reformed,] *then he would kindle a fire in the gates of Ieruſalem, and*

Verſ. 22. The Lords gratious promiſe to the reformation of the Sabbath, *viz.* the continuance of their Kings, and of the dignity and proſperitie of that Nation.

Verſ. 24. *See how a through reformation of the Sabbath will pacifie the Lords wrath. All deſiring the eſtabliſhing of the Throne of the Lords anointed, and proſperitie of their Nation, to looke to it.*

Behold what friends they are to Princes, State, Church, and Common-wealth, who for their owne liberty begin to call into queſtion the time of the Sabbath.

Ierem. 17. 27. *Thus to bring in ſecretly the neglect of Gods word and ſervice, and therewith all pollution of the Sabbath, and finally Atheiſme, or*

Popery, or both. So to bring all this wrath upon this our Nation, though we hope that they conſider not ſo much. Verſ. 27.

it

it should devoure the Palaces thereof, and should not be quenched.

Vengeance. Kindling fire in the gates where their contempt of the Sabbath had most shewed it selfe.

Vengeance.] The vengeance denounced for this sinne is most proportionall; first, the threatning of the *kindling of that fire in the gates of Ierusalem, which should not be quenched untill it had consumed the Palaces thereof,* [that is, untill it had burnt downe the houses and substance of Princes and Nobles, Gentrie and Comminaltie, and made them all desolate.] And this fire must begin in those gates, thorow which their carrying and recarrying had most beene, where their contempt of Gods Sabbath had beene most openly shewed, or at least, where the neglect of the Magistrate had beene most apparant, there the fire must be set first.

Their seventie yeeres captivitie for prophaning his seventh day. *Levit.* 26. 43.

Secondly, the holy Ghost hath shewed plainly, that one maine cause why the Lord continued their plague the Captivity so long, even seventie yeeres, was the prophanation of his Sabbath, according to the denunciation in the Law in the six and twentieth of *Leviticus, That the Land should then enjoy her Sabbaths*; that is, then it should rest, when it lay waste without inhabitant: when they should willingly beare the punishment of their iniquitie, because they had in their prosperitie despised his Lawes, and their soules had abhorred his ordinances. But more specially it came to passe, *to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Ieremie, untill the Land had her fill of Sabbaths, for all the dayes that shee lay desolate, shee kept Sabbath to fulfill seventie yeeres.* Because shee would not give the Lord his one day of seven, to rest to him, and to attend his service only, for all his mercies; hee would make them and all others to see his most righteous vengeance written in their plague, as in the Sunne-beames. Seeing they would not rest on his Sabbaths according to that his chiefe ordinance, to declare their homage to him, their Land should rest when it was desolate. And for that they would not give him his seventh day, so easie a service to so great a Lord, hee would make them feele the plague of it, not for seven daies, for that had beene nothing, nor for seven yeere only, though that had beene most heavie, but for ten times seven yeeres, untill they and all the world might see in them, a notable ensamble of the justice of the Lord in so righteous and yet so terrible a vengeance.

And to fulfill the Word by the mouth of *Jeremie.* 2 *Chron.* 36. 21. *The feeling of such a plague (as was towards us) but one only day, would make all who escaped to stoope most willingly unto the Lord.*

When their Land should rest.

And make them feele his anger for it, ten times seven yeere.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, that worthie governour *Nehemiah* doth acknowledge this, when after their ſeventie yeeres captivitie accompliſhed, ſome of the remainder of them, which were brought backe to Ieruſalem, began to fall to that profanation againe, of carrying and recarrying thorow the gates of Ieruſalem on the Sabbath. And not only ſo, but ſuffered ſtrangers, marchants of Tyre, to bring in fiſh, and other wares, and to ſell them on the Sabbath unto the people. This good Governour reproves the Rulers for it, and asketh them, *what evill thing that was, which* [a] *they did to breake the Sabbath day.* [Wherein the Lord would have all the Church to ſee, and to take ſpeciall notice to the end of the world, that all the open ſinnes of the people which are in the Magiſtrates power to redreſſe, are made the ſinnes of the Magiſtrates, if they endevour not to the uttermoſt of their power to reforme them. God will require them at their hands, as a ſpeciall cauſe why he is diſhonoured by them, and why his wrath comes upon his people. They are after a ſort the murderers of them, in that they are publike watchmen, and therefore God will require the bloud at their hands, even as well as at the hands of the unfaithfull Miniſters.] And hereupon long after this time, even after the Captivitie, that holy *Nehemiah* comes particularly to this ſame ſinne, which *Ieremie* had thus openly given them warning of, in the name of the Lord, and for which he had threatned this vengeance, and ſaith, *did not your fathers thus, and our God brought all this plague upon this citie? yet ye increaſe the wrath upon Iſrael in breaking the Sabbath*; giving them to underſtand plainly, that the profanation of the Sabbath was one principall cauſe of their deſolation, and alſo that it did continue ſo long, like as it had beene threatned. Secondly, he doth not only rebuke the Rulers for this ſinne, but hee ſeeth preſently to the redreſſe of it himſelfe, and to the ſtaying of the further indignation of the Lord, that it might not breake forth as fire for the ſame.

Neh.13.15. Nehemiah acknowledgeth this after the Captivitie, and laboureth thereon to redreſſe that ſin.

Verſ.16,17.
[a] *Looke here you holy Rulers, all thoſe ſinnes committed under you, which you might redreſſe, are your ſinnes. How will you ſtand before him whoſe Lieutenants you are?*
Ezek.3.17,18.
Ezek.34.2,10.

Nehem.13.18.

Former examples of Gods vengeance ſhould warne us.

I ſhewed how the Holy Ghoſt hath recorded carefully ſundry moſt ſingular vertues in this holy Governour, to the end no doubt that he might be a patterne and preſident to all good Governours to the end of the world. As namely his zeale that he bare to the name and houſe of God; his griefe to ſee the ruines

Give me leave to digreſſe a little, to ſet once againe before all faces the lively picture of a worthy Ru-

of Ierusalem; his compassion for the poore people, and for all their miseries; his watchfulnesse to take each opportunitie to doe them good; his courage for the Lord and his people; his vigilancie and paines, his care not only to command for their good, but to see every thing put into execution; evils to be not only talked of, but redressed also, and himselfe to doe that first in his owne person, which he required of the rest. So to the very purpose in hand, amongst other these three are never to be forgotten of any of those Rulers who looke to receive *Nehemiahs* praise and lasting comfort.

ler, who had seen the miseries of a Captivitie for sinne; which our good God hath so wonderfully saved us from, and here so graciously warnes us of. Three ensamples in *Nehemiah* never to be forgotten of tender-hearted and worthy Governours.

1. His looking forthwith to the particular state and miseries of the people, to be more affected with it. *Neh.* 2. 11, 12. *Behold the right picture of a vigilant and happie Governour.* *Vers.* 16. *Vers.* 17. *Vers.* 18. *Vers.* 19. *Vers.* 20.

2. His willing and compassionate hearing of the cries and grievances of the poore.

First, that presently after that the Lord had heard his praier, granted him to finde favour in the eyes of the King his Lord and Master, and had armed him with authoritie for the repaire of Ierusalem, and also brought him safe thither, that he delayed not to performe all the good unto it that ever possibly he could: for within three dayes, to the end that he might be more affected with the miseries of the people, and desolations of Ierusalem, he neglects his sleepe, riseth in the night, goeth taking but a few with him; for he told no man what God had put into his heart to doe at Ierusalem, lest any should hinder his desire: he knew the malice of Satan well enough. Thus in his owne person he viewes the wals, how they were broken downe, and the gates burnt with fire. Whereupon he takes a just occasion, upon the due consideration of the miseries that Ierusalem was in, to speake more effectually unto the Noblemen and the Rulers, yea to speake even to their verie hearts upon a tender feeling and an undoubted knowledge of their estate: and also to speake unto the Priests and to all the people, and especially to them that laboured in that worke, to incourage them to the more speedie repaire of that poore ruinated Ierusalem.

Secondly, whereas the poore people did grow into great want and miserie through their former spoiling, and now by their continuall imployment in building and repairing: and that the richer sort took occasion upon their need to wring and eat them up, as is usuall in scarcitie; the holy Governour to shew his love and tender compassion, and to knit the hearts of all the poore Comminaltie more unto him and to the Lord, and to animate and incourage them the more unto this happy work, he sheweth himselfe

himſelfe a worthy preſident indeed: for he doth not only heare the cries of the poore for their ſeverall kinds of oppreſſion; but he groweth alſo into an holy anger and griefe for their diſtreſſe and vexations. *He rebukes the Princes and the Rulers for it, and tels them how they laid burdens every one of them upon their poore brethren. Then ſets before them their ſinne, by his owne contrary example. That hee according to his abilitie had redeemed his brethren the Iewes, which were ſold unto the Heathen; and asketh them whether they would ſell them againe, or that they ſhould be ſold unto themſelves* to be made their ſlaves. By which worthy ſpeech, and urging his owne enſample, he puts all the oppreſſors to ſilence, and qualifies the great men. And afterwards preſſeth them further *for the feare of the Lord, and the reproach of the Heathen,* but chiefly by his owne enſample, to leave off their exactions, and every one to helpe their poore brethren, and to reſtore unto them againe whatſoever they had by their might extorted from them. And ſtill herein proſecuteth and preſſeth his owne enſample upon them; for that he himſelfe had beene ſo farre off from any ſuch oppreſſion, that cleane contrarily hee, his brethren and ſervants had lent them money and corne freely. Now hereby eſpecially in ſetting thus before their faces his owne enſample, and that he had not ſo much as taken his due maintenance, leſt he ſhould any way grieve the poore people, but had contrarily releeved ſundrie of them at his owne charges, as they all knew, he ſo farre prevailed with all the Nobles, Rulers, and rich of the people, that they yeelded unto him forthwith; That they would reſtore all which they had ſo gotten from the poore, and doe in all things as hee had ſaid. Whereupon hee inſtantly takes the preſent occaſion which the Lord gave, ſo ſoone as ever they had condeſcended, and cals together the Prieſts, by whom he cauſed every man to take a ſolemne oath, that they would doe according to this promiſe, leſt they ſhould ſtart backe againe from this holy determination. And not ſo only, but to confirme it the more, and to make it altogether irrevocable, hee binds it with a moſt dreadfull execration, ſhaking his lap and ſaying, *So let God ſhake out every man who will not performe this promiſe, from his houſe and from his labour; even thus let him be ſhaked out and emptied. And all the congregation ſaid Amen, and*

Neh 5. 1, 2, 3, 4. 6, 7.
The happy way to redreſſe the evils of Gods people.

How may good Governours prevaile, when they wiſh nothing to be done, but what themſelves doe firſt.
Nehem. 6. 12.
How good is a word ſpoken in due ſeaſon.
Prov. 25. 11.

praised the Lord. And the people did according to this promise.

3. He seeth the reformation of the evils himselfe.

Thirdly, to come to the last point: This is no lesse to be admired in him, that he himselfe sees the redresse and reformation of the abominations, and doth not commit the trust thereof to others. As in this matter of the Sabbath, besides his sharpe reproofe of the Rulers, and his charging them that it was their sinne, and telling them of this plague and vengeance that had come for it; not thinking all this enough, upon the evening before *the Sabbath, when it began to be darke, hee himselfe commands to shut up the gates of the Citie, and gives a strait charge that they should not be opened untill after the Sabbath. He also sets some of his owne servants at the gates to see to it, that no burden should be brought in upon the Sabbath day. Thus he made the Chapmen and Merchants to tary once or twice all night without the wals. And moreover protested amongst them, and said unto them, why tary ye all night about the wall?* yea, he also threatneth them, *that if they did it once againe, he would lay hands upon them. So that from that time forth they came no more upon the Sabbath.* Finally, whereas the Temple and holy things of God had beene shamefully abused through the uncleannesse of the Priests and Levites themselves, and by prophane persons entring into it, he chargeth *the Levits that they should cleanse themselves, and so keep the gates* [of the Temple, that none uncleane might enter in] so to sanctifie the Sabbath day. And by this chiefly *he is incouraged to intreat the Lord, to remember him concerning all this that he had done, and to pardon him according to his great mercy.*

And especially of the Sabbath. *Nehem.* 13. 20.

Vers. 21.

Thus this worthy Ruler sitting in the seat of judgement chaseth away all evill with his eyes. Prov. 20. 8. *Nehem.* 13. 22.

Application.

Application] To returne unto our selves; for this is a matter that doth highly concerne us, with the continuance of our peace and all our prosperitie. Is not this a principall commandement of that his divine, morall, and perpetual Law? doth not then the Lord as well require the sanctification of his Sabbath at our hands, as he did at theirs? Hath he not as great a care of his honour now, as ever in former time? And are not his holy things as much to be regarded now, and the soules of his people as pretious as ever formerly? Will he not then be as angrie with us for prophaning his holy things, and neglecting the saving of his people, as ever he was with them? yea, doth he not expect as much homage of us, as ever of any people since the beginning of the world?

Exod. 20. 8.

world? I meane not for their ſtrict ceremoniall worſhip, but the attending to that worſhip in ſpirit and truth, and performing all the exerciſes of his religion publike and private? Nay, may he not moſt juſtly expect ſo much more of us, as our mercies may ſeeme greater (all things conſidered together, eſpecially the long continuance of them) than ever of any other nation before? will he not alſo as certainly bleſſe us abundantly, our King and Prince, with all the royall line, our Nobles and Rulers, and all other from the higheſt to the loweſt, and make us as much to flouriſh in the world as ever he did *Iudah*, if we will honour him herein, giving him his due, and that ſanctification and grace may thereby abound amongſt us? will he not open us the windowes of heaven, and powre us downe a bleſſing? And ſhall not the ſame particular bleſſing be performed to every one of us (according to our places) to whom he gives ſuch hearts to ſanctifie his Sabbath? Or what is wanting in outward bleſſings, will he not abundantly ſupply in ſpirituall and inward? So contrarily, have we not cauſe to feare that ſame vengeance threatned by *Ieremie, of a fire to be ſet in the gates of Ieruſalem*, or a heavier plague than that to come upon us, to lay us utterly waſte, and make our cities and townes as heapes of ſtones, and that not for ſeventie yeares alone, but that we ſhall remaine for ever as a deſolate wilderneſſe without any face of a Church to be ſeene in it againe (as was almoſt fulfilled) without unfained repentance even in this behalfe? How ſhould we looke to eſcape this righteous judgement of the Lord, if this terrible enſample of theirs, and that ſo neere an eſcape of our owne, with all our warnings out of Gods booke, by the mouthes of his true ſervants, Sabbath by Sabbath, can doe us no good? To omit many moſt dreadfull fires in our land, within theſe few yeares, bringing houſes and townes, or the greateſt part thereof to ruine: and that ſundry of them have beene obſerved to have fallen upon the Sabbath dayes, or upon occaſion of preparation to the profaning of the Sabbath; yet can that utter conſuming and unquenchable fire be ever from before our eyes, the fuell whereof the Lord himſelfe ordained to be ſet, and readie to kindle at the gates of our Ieruſalem, as he threatned that moſt famous Citie, and ſo the flames of it to have conſumed all the

Malac. 3.10.
Eſay 58.13,14.
Eſay 56.1,2,3, 4, 5.
Ierem. 17.27.

Remember that conſuming fire, wherewith the Lord hath threatned us.
Shall there be evill in a citie, and the Lord God hath not done it?
Amos 3.6.
I forme the light and create dark-

neſſe: I make peace and create evill, I the Lord doe all theſe things.
Eſay 45. 7.

Regall deſcent, that there ſhould never have beene any to have ridden thorow thoſe gates any more; at leaſt never any in their true ancient and royall dignitie, unleſſe perhaps as the vaſſals of that bloudie Whore of Babylon, to have led her horſe, or ſuch as on whoſe neeks ſhe might have ſet her foot at her pleaſure, and reigned over as a Queene? And finally to have utterly conſumed all our pleaſant palaces, and made our land as a forlorne and forſaken wildernesſe.

Our land made well-neere as a deſolate widow.
Apoc. 18. 2.
As Babylon.

Was it not almoſt made a deſolate widow, deſolate of the heavenly truth, and deſtitute of his glorious and gracious preſence, or for any of his people to have dwelt in any more? And what ſhould then have become of it, but to have beene made as Babylon, meet for nothing elſe, but to have beene an habitation for Idols, the hold of all foule ſpirits, and of every uncleane and hatefull bird? Can we deeme that the Lord was bringing upon us not only their vengeance, that threatned unto them for profaning his Sabbath, but one ſo farre beyond it as no heart can conceive, and yet in the very ſame kinde; and that he ſhould doe it without moſt juſt cauſe, or not for the ſame ſinne, if we our ſelves be as guiltie thereof as they?

Let us therefore here eſpecially enter into a more due conſideration hereof, and a little compare together the ſeverall ſins concerning the Sabbath, for which the Lord threatneth this plague to ſet this fire, and for which he brought it. That ſo if we finde it our owne caſe, we may in time humble our ſelves, and prevent him by meeting him with an intreatie of peace: for otherwiſe we have juſt cauſe of feare that he will enter into judgement with us, both all in generall, and undoubtedly everie particular tranſgreſſor. To proceed in order: Is it not we upon whom the Lord may complaine now, and expoſtulate thus withall? Thou haſt deſpiſed my holy things, and polluted my Sabbaths. Is it not we that have too generally deſpiſed them in making no reckoning of the glorious Goſpell of Ieſus Chriſt, that Goſpell of the kingdome; that all have wondred that ever it hath continued ſo long with us? Are not we they that are become ſo full, and generally ſo indifferent? Who for moſt part are ſo fruitleſſe, as if we had never beene the vineyard of the Lord? And how could this ever have beene, if we had truly

Ezek. 22. 8.
We are they on whom God now complaines for deſpiſing his holy things.

remembred

remembred his Sabbaths, and reverenced his Sanctuarie? But alas what heart having any feeling at all, hath not mourned for our grievous profanation of his Sabbaths? What godly Minister hath not cried out openly? Are not we they to whose charge the Lord may lay it, that we have had as the Prophet speaketh, a conspiracie: I meane in regard of such as have thrust in themselves to be the watchmen of the Lord; a conspiracie to continue still in blindnesse, greedinesse, sleeping, sensualitie and negligence? May he not charge us, that many of us have most of all other polluted the holy things of the Lord: as namely his most heavenly word by unabilitie to carrie this glorious name of the Lord before his people, in a right opening and expounding the same, and applying it to the soules and consciences of men, or in lifting up Iesus Christ so as to draw our people unto him, in an admiration of him, and the riches in him? That many of us in stead hereof, have made that glorious Gospell to be vile and loathed almost to all sorts, through our negligent and unreverent handling of it, or rather by our slubbering it over. When everie poore wretch, even the most blinde in our Congregations may see, that that which many of us have done, hath beene not of any conscience to honour the Lord, or of care to save his people, but only to keepe the maintenance, the wages of the true labourer, and a little to satisfie the law. Are not the wofull fruits of our labours too evident testimonies hereof; when as too many of us can hardly set forth a man, whom in all our time we have won to a true love of the Gospell, and to make conscience of the wayes of the Lord? May he not charge this on too many others of us, who would be specially accounted of in the Church, that through our unsatiable greedinesse, which we have shewed in plucking to our selves and wringing by violence, purchasing to us great estates, forgetting the poore, and in lacke of compassion; others by rioting, drinking, and profaneneſse or filthinesse, have caused the name of the Lord to be blasphemed? Yea, that over-many have hereby turned their Congregations away from the love of the truth and all conscience almost, to become much backwarder in religion, after many yeeres that they have been amongst them, than they were the first day that they came unto them. And which is much worse, that they above all others,

That we have polluted his name.

others, have turned multitudes to Poperie and Atheiſme, and to blaſpheme God and his truth daily, as conceiting that theſe are the fruits of the Goſpell which theſe men profeſſe and preach? who heareth not of this too often? whoſe bones quake not for it, when they know the ſinne in too many, and the complaint ſo juſt?

It is true indeed that thoſe ſlanders are by the Popiſh ſort caſt on the beſt, and thoſe whom the world cannot ſtaine for any ſuch matter (for ſuch lying and ſlandering are well knowne to be the chiefe murdering weapons of Antichriſt) but what is that to them, who by their fearefull ſins give them that advantage, and that the Lord himſelfe ſhould have ſo juſt cauſe to complaine that he is profaned amongſt us by ſuch? And yet to proceed further with this complaint of the Lord, may he not alſo challenge us, that we have put no difference betweene the holy and profane, the cleane and uncleane, admitting too uſually the moſt notorious ſcorners of religion, haters of all goodneſſe and of all ſhew of pietie; yea ſwearers, blaſphemers, and men unconſcionable in all their dealings, uncleane and vile perſons, whoſe mouthes are nothing elſe but loathſome pits of filthineſſe, or rotten ſepulchres, ſending forth continually the moſt noiſome ſtench of all abominations as the pits of Sodome, to anger him and grieve his Spirit? May he not tell us too truly, that in many places, theſe are as good with us as any others? for if they be rich or of reputation, then are they for us to fawne upon and admire; if they be poore and contemptible, then are they fit to make our ſelves merry with. And ſo that theſe, and worſe than theſe (if worſe can be) are received too indifferently to the ſacred things of the Lord in moſt of the Congregations of ignorant and unconſcionable Miniſters, without any admonition at all, or without any particular profeſſion of amendment, of thoſe their notorious and moſt ſhamefull ſinnes. That they are as meet and as well prepared as the beſt, to approach to his holy table, and to be made partakers of thoſe ſacred myſteries of the bodie and bloud of his Sonne our Saviour, to eat the bread of his children? Even thoſe who (our ſelves being judges) have need of a long and great humiliation, to teſtifie their repentance, and to ſatisfie their Miniſters and the Congregations

Putting no difference betweene the holy and profane.

before

before they ſhould preſume ſo much as to looke towards the Table of the Lord. Thoſe who have more juſt cauſe to caſt downe themſelves before the Church-doores, crying out againſt themſelves, tread upon me unſavory ſalt. Are not many of thoſe admitted, any one whereof were enough (ſofarre as we are able to judge or diſcerne) to bring as heavie a vengeance on the congregation, as *Achan* did on Iſrael? Are not thoſe too ordinarily received, who cannot examine their owne hearts, to ſee their wofull eſtate, and what need they have of Ieſus Chriſt, or to diſcerne of his moſt precious body and bloud? And therefore muſt they not needs eat and drinke their owne dreadfull judgement? Muſt they not of neceſſitie provoke the Lords moſt heavie indignation againſt themſelves, and againſt the whole congregations; yea againſt the whole Land, they being ſo generally diſperſed?

The moſt ignorant who cannot examine themſelves being too ordinarily received.

Muſt not the bloud of their ſoules, which is ſo ſhed, needs cry louder for vengeance, than the bloud of *Abel*, againſt all who are any way guiltie of it, beſides the manifeſt pollution of the holy things of God? Wheras, if they were kept back, they might be brought out of ignorance, and out of the ſnare of Sathan to unfained repentance, to their everlaſting ſalvation and glory. So that if we had no moe ſinnes in our Land, to bring upon us the fierce wrath of the Lord, and theſe manifold plagues whereby he hath a long time exerciſed and threatned our Nation, we might juſtly acknowledge that we had deſerved every part for this ſinne, even for this alone; like as *Paul* ſaith of the Corinthians, *for this cauſe many are weake and ſicke among you, and many ſleepe*. Who having but the leaſt ſparke of grace doth not many a time bewaile this? And the rather for that this is an ordinary complaint, or at leaſt a cloake to ſay, How can we helpe or redreſſe it? who will beare us out if we keepe them backe?

This ſinne enough to bring Gods plagues upon the whole land.

1 *Cor.* 11. 30.

But to come to that, which is the holieſt of all, that greateſt and moſt dreadfull cenſure of Excommunication, which being rightly uſed, hath power to ſhut heaven againſt all impenitent offenders, to cut them off from all comfort in Chriſt, ſo long as they doe ſo remaine in their impenitencie, to execute Gods vengeance upon them; to beat downe and breake in peeces the proudeſt and hardeſt heart that ever was in the Church of God.

The abuſe of that great cenſure of excommunication with us too uſually.

The

The very beholding whereof is able to humble all the congregation, to wring teares out of the flintie heart. So that it is of power to make all to ſtand in awe, and to be afraid of diſhonouring or provoking the Higheſt, for the perill of that his moſt terrible thunderbolt: to beware of giving any offence to the congregations, for feare of being caſt out of the Church as Heathens and Publicans, and ſo after a ſort left up to Sathan, at leaſt ſpiritually, and left utterly deſtitute of Gods protection.

Matth. 18. 17.
1 *Cor.* 5. 4, 5.

To omit all other abuſes, which the Lord Ieſus, whoſe eyes are as a flame of fire, ſeeth and knoweth well enough, and will one day ſhew before the whole world unleſſe we repent. Who in moſt places doth eſteeme this, though the greateſt cenſure of the Church, any further but a matter of a little charges, if men be of abilitie, or otherwiſe of a little worldly ſhame, if they be not able to redeeme it with the purſe?

Hiding our eies from Gods Sabbath how. *Ezek.* 22. 26.

But to paſſe over this, and ſtill to follow the Lords complaint. Are not wee thoſe of whom the Lord cries out, *They have hid their eyes from my Sabbath, that I am polluted amongſt them?* Are there not multitudes of us that may juſtly be charged to be afraid to looke within into the publike duties of the Sabbath, as thoſe waighty and neceſſary charges of preaching painfully in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon: of Catechizing to feed the young Babes and tender Lambes of Ieſus Chriſt, with that ſincere milke of the Word, wherein the chiefe love of the faithfull Miniſter towards Chriſt is declared, and the chiefe good and hope of the flocke, and which he will ſo ſtrictly exact? May not very many of us be rightly charged that we dare not teach all the counſels of God to our people, even neceſſary to be knowne unto ſalvation? that we dare not lift up our voices as Trumpets, to tell Iudah of her abominations, to tell our people of their ſinnes and tranſgreſſions, thus to ſave every ſoule, and pull every one out of the power and ſnares of Satan? eſpecially if we have any great ones in our congregations, or ſuch as we feare may hurt us? May not this alſo be charged juſtly upon the heads of moſt of us, that we are afraid to looke into the private duties of the holy miniſterie, as what watching is required in us to ſave every ſoule by all manner of private admonitions, exhortations, reproofe, comforts: what good enſamples we ſhould give in going before all

1. Publike duties.

Eſay 58. 1.

2. From privat duties.

1 *Tim.* 4. 12.

others,

others, both we and our families in every Christian duty, chiefly in all holinesse, gravitie, mercy and compassion? Must not a great part of us needs be afraid to looke too much into these, lest wee should binde our selves to over-much toile and wearinesse? Sith every one of us are now readie to say, as *Peter* to our Saviour, It is good for us to favour our selves. Or lest wee should bring terror upon our consciences, for that we have not, nor yet intend to performe these unto the Lord. Or at least, lest if we should preach these things, we should be witnesses against our selves, and have our owne mouths to condemne us, and our people to be able to convince us for our idlenesse and unfaithfulnesse. Or finally, lest if we should urge our people too vehemently, we should be accounted over precise and too busie.

1 Cor. 9. 19, 20, 21.

Why we must needs be afraid to looke into these duties.

Is it not most evident that we are generally, as it were afraid, to looke upon the open and most notorious abuses ordinarily practised on the Sabbath, even at the time of publike assemblies; lest we should be driven by crying out against them, to purchase displeasure; and so thinke it farre better to let them alone, untill both our selves, our people and Nation, be ready to perish together? If it be not so that feare doth hinder us, or some like carnall respect, how is it that we doe not generally every of us, put constantly and carefully each of these duties of the Sabbath in practise, which are agreed upon by us all, and by all the Churches of Christ, that the Lord lookes for of us, and will one day certainly call each of us to a most strict account for them, and will require at our hands the bloud of every soule, which hath perished for lacke of the performance of them; and therefore must needs be angrie with our sinfull Land, for our so generall a neglect of them? How is it that we give our congregations any rest untill the notorious and open prophanation be reformed; and that they begin to make conscience of the particular duties of the Sabbath, to consecrate them as whole holy-daies unto the Lord, to his honour and service, that he may be pacified towards them, and towards our Nation?

So into the notorious abuses of the Sabbath.

If we be not afraid to looke upon these duties, why doe we not put them in practise forthwith?

Of every one of us that have beene negligent in any one of these, the Lord thus complaines, that we are the men that have hid our eyes from his Sabbath; we are they amongst whom and by whom he is prophaned. This shall we finde our consciences charged

The Lord complaines of each of us that have beene negligent in

any of these duties, that we are the men who have hid our eyes from his Sabbath.

charged with, if any vengeance come upon our Nation, that our consciences be awaked, or at least, when wee come to stand before him to give an account for every soule: for had we beene thus faithfull as Gods watchmen and messengers, shewing how severely he will require all these things of every soule, we had undoubtedly turned multitudes of them from their evill waies, and in the rest we had restrained that outrage in sinne, and our people had never so given over themselves to the prophanation of the Sabbath. So God tels us by *Ieremie*, if the Prophets had stood in his counsels, and had declared his word unto his people, then they should have turned them from their evill waies, and from the wickednesse of their inventions. So that both the pollution of the name of the Lord, and the bloud of his people, must needs be required of every one of us, that have not done our uttermost endevour, thus to worke a sincere sanctification of the Sabbath, and that in every one of our people.

How we might have prevailed, if we had been faithfull. *Ierem.* 23. 22.

But to leave this point, wherein yet the Lord be mercifull unto every one of us, that have undergone this weightie function, and let him not lay this sinne unto our charge, for which of us can say, I am altogether cleare from this sinne, and from the bloud of my people in this behalfe? And now to proceed againe to the Lords complaint. Are not we, for the greatest part, they who have thought the Sabbath over-long; yea that have usually accounted that little pittance of it, wherein wee have beene exercised in any part of his worship, to have beene farre too much, and a wearisomenesse, whilest we have beene restrained and hindered from our owne waies? Some of us from following our vaine pleasures, others from our profits, and every man, as our corrupt hearts doe carry us? Can wee excuse ourselves of that same very particular sinne, for which the Lord threatneth to kindle that dreadfull fire in the gates of Ierusalem that should not be quenched? I meane that sinne of carrying and recarrying by our ordinary Carriers, upon the Sabbath, in all the parts of our Land, as well as upon any other day, without any difference at all. As though the high God had no homage to be performed by such men that day; or as though they were none of his people, nor their soules to be regarded. Or as if they were not within the number of those that are within our

Amos 8. 5. *Malac.* 1. 12, 13. To consider whether we be not they who have thought the Sabbath over-long.

Prophaned the Sabbath ordinarily, by carrying in all the parts of our Land.

gates,

gates, within the authoritie and power of the Civill and Eccleſiaſticall Magiſtrate, and for which they muſt give an account as well as for the reſt, if they have not done their endevour to reſtraine them. Or as though the Lord had not a care now, that pity and compaſſion ſhould be ſhewed to the beaſts which they drive, as well as ever in former time.

Our pretended neceſſities can no more excuſe or ſave us from the ſame denunciation, and the like execution of the Lords terrible vengeance, than theirs of Iudah could: for looke what we can ſay for excuſe of it, as that our ordinary carrying on the Sabbath cannot be helped, they might have ſaid every way as much for Iudah and Ieruſalem. But as that could not ſerve them, but when they will not reforme it, being ſolemnly and publikely admoniſhed from the Lord, the fire is kindled indeed, and at length conſumes all, even ſo muſt we expect: eſpecially having beene ſo long warned from the mouthes of all the faithfull meſſengers of God in every place, unleſſe we repent of it.

Our pretended neceſſities cannot excuſe and ſave us no more than them.

But alas, what is this tranſgreſſion, to the ſinne of the greateſt part in this behalfe? Is it not uſuall among moſt, that if wee have any ordinary journey to take, the Sabbath muſt be it, the Lords owne day? We cannot ſpare ſo much time upon any of our ſix (for ſo we account them) no not an houre upon one of them, yet theſe may have ſome colour, and every one may have his fig-leafe, to hide his nakednеſſe from mans eie (as he imagineth) and to deceive his owne evill heart. The like we ſay of the abuſe at Wakes and ſuch like meetings on the Sabbath day: That his ſervice muſt of neceſſitie be neglected, by all ſuch at home in the places of their owne dwellings: the holy things of God, and the meanes of their ſalvation rejected and deſpiſed. Muſt not the ſoules of their Paſtors and watch-men needs be grieved in them continually, for theſe and the like, if they have any conſcience at all? Muſt not all ſorts be offended by their evill enſample? And hence muſt they not needs be brought to thinke as they doe, that the Sabbaths of the Lord are not at all to be regarded, more than a little for a faſhion to ſatiſfie the Law; That any thing will ſerve the Lord, and every man ſhall be ſaved, live hee how wretchedly or beaſtly ſoever he will.

Reſerving journeyes ordinarily for the Sabbath day.

God muſt needs be provoked for theſe things.

But

Concourſe to Playes and the vileneſſe of them.

But to paſſe over theſe alſo, with all other our unlawfull flockings and lewd ſports upon our Sabbath, by every of which the worke of the Lord is hindered, as every one muſt needs acknowledge. What defence can we make for that concourſe that is ordinarily to thoſe wanton playes, in ſuch places, even upon that day? In which are the continuall ſowing of all Atheiſme; and throwing the fire-brands of all filthie and noyſome luſts into the hearts of poore ſimple ſoules; the ſtirring up and blowing the coles of concupiſcence, to kindle and increaſe the fire thereof, to breake out into an hideous flame, untill it burne downe to hell. Aske but of your owne hearts as in the preſence of the Lord, and you will need no further witneſſe. And how can it be otherwiſe? How can you take thoſe fire-brands of hell into your boſomes and not be burnt? Is not every filthie ſpeech, each whoriſh geſture, ſuch a fire-brand caſt by Satan into the heart of every wanton beholder, as a brand caſt into a bundle of tow, or into a barrell of gunpowder, to ſet all on fire of a ſudden? Thy protection is gone whoſoever thou art that adventureſt hither; for thou art out of thy wayes. Theſe are not the waies of the Lord, and much leſſe upon his Sabbath, when thou ſhouldeſt be amongſt his people, and doing his worke, where his Angels wait for thee, his owne preſence expects thee. How then ſhouldeſt thou poſſibly eſcape, when thou wilt offer thy heart naked unto thoſe fiery darts of Satan? How canſt thou thinke to be delivered from that flame in thy ſoule; that fire in the infernall lake, that river of brimſtone, that ſhall never be conſumed nor quenched, when thou wilt deſperatly caſt thy ſelfe headlong into the midſt thereof? How can it be but that ſuch muſt needs bring fagots and fire-brands to ſet in the gates of our Ieruſalem?

The inevitable danger to frequenters of Playes.

Such are from under Gods protection.

They cannot thinke to eſcape.

But yet to omit theſe alſo, and the chiefe cauſers of this iniquitie, thoſe trumpetters of Satan, who call from God and his houſe unto the Theaters, from his heavenly Majeſtie to his ſworne enemie. What can we anſwer the Lord, why he ſhould not proceed againſt us anew, and kindle his fire againe for our frequenting of Tavernes and Ale-houſes at that time, and of all ſuch like places, where there is nothing ſo common, as ſcorning at him and his ſeruice, and at every one who makes any more con-

Frequenting Tavernes and Ale-houſes, where nothing is more common than ſcorning all pietie upon the Sabbath.

ſcience

science to honour him, and sanctifie his day than themselves doe? As if we proclaimed defiance to his sacred Majestie, to doe his worst against us? Must not these, thinke wee, much more vex his soule, and provoke him to the execution of this vengeance, to kindle that consuming fire, than all the bearing of burdens, the carrying and recarrying practised in Ierusalem?

Examples of former times can doe us no good, and why.

All the ensamples of former times, wherein wee and our fathers have thus spent the Sabbath, and yet done well enough, shall no more warrant or secure us, than it did them of Iudah; for our fathers sinne herein, first provoked the wrath and kindled the fire, and we heape up fagots and gunpowder, to make the burning more terrible, and the dispatch more quicke. In all the time hitherto God hath only warned us, yet spared us still in compassion unto this day, but now he bids every one to repent and that speedily. He hath now expected not one other yeere alone, but one ten times told, since he had last built that hideous pile before our eies, readie to set it on fire, looking that these and all our hainous provocations should surely and presently have beene redressed; but seeing his long patience hath beene thus abused, and he still more polluted, and even all contempt cast upon him, what can we looke for, but that this fire of his vengeance should breake forth of a sudden, and never be quenched againe, untill this our sinne be purged?

God hath only warned us hitherto.

Looke but in the first part of this Watch, which is the Rule of life, and therein behold the severall duties of the Sabbath to be performed unto the Lord, as all of us doe generally agree, that he doth and will require a conscionable practise of them all, at the hands of every one of us, and then we shall find worke enough of the Lords to exercise our selves in that day; though every Sabbath were as long as that longest day, when the Sun stood still, untill that *Iosuah* had gotten the victory over the Lords enemies. And we may finde withall such varietie of heavenly exercises, so pleasant to the soule which hath tasted the goodnesse of the Lord, as that it can never be wearie, but feele a continuall increase of sweetnesse, in the pleasures and dainties of the Lords house, and in doing his worke, if wee labour to performe them as we ought.

Oh yee that are set for the house and Sabbath of the Lord, looke

The ſpeech turned to all who have the chiefe charge for the houſe of the Lord and his Sabbath.

1. To the wiſe hearted Ruler.

looke to your ſoules as the Lord bids you, even as you regard your owne lives, and the lives of all Gods people; yea as you regard the flouriſhing, peaceable and happie eſtate of our King, Prince, Nobles and Nation, and to quench for ever that conſuming fire; looke to the Lords Sabbath! Yee moſt wiſe and worthy Rulers remember that ſpeech and practiſe of *Nehemiah*, who had ſeene the miſeries of a Captivitie, and the aſhes of the fire of Gods vengeance, and never forget how neere you were to have felt the like or a farre worſe, and ſo ſet your ſelves for the honouring of your God in his Sabbath, and hee will be with you, you ſhall then finde that comfort in your ſoules, which that holy Governour did, to intreat the Lord to remember you in mercy according to that. And finally, you ſhall be ſure of the ſweet name and memoriall of *Nehemiah* remaining for you in earth, as a bleſſing, and ſhall reſt and triumph in the everlaſting Sabbath.

2. To the holy Miniſters.

But above all, all you the holy Miniſters of the Lord, ever keepe in freſh memorie, where the Lord by the Prophet *Ezekiel* laies the chiefe blame for the breach of his Sabbath, that the Prieſts had done all. They had hid their eyes from his Sabbath, he was prophaned among them. And therefore the vengeance muſt begin at the Sanctuary; and all the bloud chiefly to be required at their hands.

Theſe things thus thought of by a ſerious meditation, I ſhall not need to ſay any more to any of thoſe, unto whom the Lord ſhall vouchſafe but the leaſt touch of conſcience, or any feare of his word and threatnings. And hitherto for their prophaneneſſe in polluting the Lords Sabbath, and what cauſe wee have all hereupon to watch and to pray, and ever to crie to God for pardoning of this ſinne.

Abomination 31.

Sundrie degrees of the increase of their profanenesse, as opposing against all power of religion, angring the Lord, and hastening the Captivitie.

FOr all the other parts of profanenesse, whereunto they did grow, it were endlesse to prosecute and to compare them to our time. I must only content my selfe to have pointed at such, as the Lord most threatneth the vengeance for.

Some speciall degrees of their profanenesse.

As first that many of them did not only pollute the Sabbath and holy things of God, and despise his word, but they moreover secretly opposed themselves against the Lord, by seeking to suppresse all true power of religion and pietie, even then when they performed his outward ceremoniall worship and gloried therein. This we may see cleerely by comparing the first Chapter of *Esay* with the 3, 5, and 58, *Micay* the 3, the 7 of *Ieremie*, and sundry other places: for thus speakes the Lord by the Prophet *Esay*, *Esay* 3.8. *Doubtlesse Ierusalem is fallen and Iudah is fallen downe, because their tongue and workes are against the Lord.* Whereby the Prophet meaneth, that howsoever they made shewes of the religion of the Lord, as appeareth manifestly in the first Chapter, yet *their words and practises were indeed all against the Lord*, and against all power and true practise of religion. Yea, they used all devices to put out all remembrance and feare of the Lord out of their hearts, with all the tokens of his wrath. As we saw how the chiefe of them continued in their excesse day and night, *never regarding the worke of the Lord, what he was about, nor considering the worke of his hands. And how they did draw iniquitie with cords of vanitie, and sinne as with cart-ropes*; each challenging and as it were inforcing others to pledge them in all outragious impieties.

1. Opposing themselves against all power of religion and godlinesse, when they gloried in his outward ceremoniall worship. *Esay* 3.8. *Esay* 1.11,12, 13,14.

Hereupon *they spake good of evill* [of all their owne evill manners, still vaunting of them] *and evill of good*, [speaking basely, as may seeme, of all true pietie, and of the good waies of God, like as it is too usuall amongst very many of us. *Thus they put darknesse for light, and light for darknesse; bitter for sweet, and sweet for sowre.* They were so wise in their owne conceit,

Having their tongues and workes against the Lord, *viz.* all true pietie and conscience of his waies, using all devices to put out the feare of the Lord. *Esay* 5.11,12, 13,14. *Vers.* 19.

Drawing iniquitie with cords of vanitie. *Vers.* 20.

Speaking good of evill, evill of good. *Vers.* 21.

ceit, as that they needed not the admonitions of the true Prophets, but accounted them as fooles, & their words as the winde. They ſcorned all the ſound and ſincere denunciation of Gods judgements. Yea, they came at length to glory in their ſhame, as in *being valorous to poure downe ſtrong drinke*, who could ſwill downe the moſt, and moſt ſpoile and abuſe the good creatures of the Lord, when many of their poore brethren were ready to periſh for lacke of bread, without any compaſſion from them or regard at all. Hence the Lord complaines of them, that they had juſtified Sodome in this behalfe [they had made the ſinnes of Sodome nothing in regard of theirs.]

Scorning at all admonition. *Ier.* 5.13. *Eſay* 28.15.

Glorying in their moſt ſhameſull ſins. *Ezek.* 16. 48,49.

They came to juſtifie the wicked. *Eſay* 5.23.

To condemne the good.

And not only ſo, but alſo they came generally to this paſſe, *to juſtifie the wicked*, even all who would doe as themſelves did, they only were the good fellowes and honeſt men. But contrarily *to take away the righteouſneſſe of the righteous from them*: to condemne all who made any more conſcience of their waies than themſelves did; and to maligne and ſpeake baſely of whatſoever vertue or religion was in them. Yea, the Spirit of the Lord witneſſeth againſt them, that *they hated the good*, all who would not (as we terme it) ſwagger and be as vile as themſelves; who would not *runne with them to all exceſſe of riot*; and much more all thoſe whom they imagined to condemne and abhorre their manners. And of the other ſide, to love only the wicked, *viz:* all ſuch as were like unto them in conditions: for ſuch alone were fit for their companies.

Hating the good. *Micb.* 3.2.

Loving the wicked.

And this was a uſuall thing, even for this very cauſe, to make all that had any feare of the Lord to be as ſignes and wonders to be ſpoken againſt, a parable of reproach meet for every man to talke of and jeſt at; yea, to bend their tongues and malice againſt, as we ſaw in *Ieremy*. Thus they ſought all devices by watching for any little halting in any of the godly, to caſt all ignominie and reproach upon them, and in them upon all true power and practiſe of religion, and to exalt the moſt vile and diſſolute, as by whom all their evill waies were juſtified, and their conſciences quieted.

Eſay 8.18. To make the godly as ſignes and parables of reproach.

Seeking devices to caſt all ſhame upon them.

From hence there was amongſt them *ſpoiling and violence* as before the floud, and that chiefly againſt the innocent. Many ſuch as raiſed *up ſtrife and contention, who ſowed debate and diſcord*:

Hab. 1.2,3,4. Hence they proceeded to ſpoiling and all violence.

for

for thus the Prophet *Habakkuk* laments: *Lord how long shall I cry and thou wilt not heare, even cry out unto thee for violence, and thou wilt not helpe? why doest thou shew me iniquitie, and cause me to behold sorrow? for spoiling and violence are before me, and there are that raise up strife and contention. Therefore the law is dissolved* (saith he) *and judgement never goeth forth*; meaning, that there could be no justice had for the good and godly: for saith the Prophet, *The wicked doe compasse about the righteous: therefore wrong judgement proceedeth*, [like as we saw in *Ieremy* and others.]

Hab. 1. 2. *Vers.* 3. *Vers.* 4.

To dissolve the Law.

And yet notwithstanding all this, they ever made great shewes of religion, in their outward ceremonies and worship when they were as Sodome. Yea, they would bestow upon the Lord multitudes of sacrifices, and those of the best fatted and fed beasts: for thus speakes the Lord by *Esay*: *Heare the word of the Lord, Oh princes of Sodome; hearken unto the law of our God oh people of Gomorrah!* [So that here was now their wickednesse and vilenesse before the Lord. And yet at the same time the Lord speaketh thus unto them.] *What have I to doe with the multitude of your sacrifices? I am full of the burnt offerings of rammes, and of the fat of fed beasts.* Where he likewise manifests their outward shewes of devotion, that they were so many, that he was full and loaden with them. Besides all these, with their oblations and incense, and observing daies solemnly, they used many of them to stretch out their hands and multiply praiers, that he was weary therewith.

And yet ever used to make great shewes of religion.

Esay 1. 10. When they were as Sodome. *Vers.* 11.

Vers. 12, 13.

Yet were they even then as vile and loathsome as Sodome, as we heard: Their words and workes so farre against the Lord, *as that they declared their sinnes as Sodome, and hid them not.*

Esay 1. 10.

Yea, *they would moreover make shewes of seeking the Lord*, [*viz.* to pacifie him] and *that they would know his waies as a nation that did righteously, and that had not forsaken the statutes of their God*, and to humble themselves in fasting when any evill was upon them: even at that time when the Lord bids the Prophets cry aloud and spare not, to lift up their voices as trumpets, and to shew his people their transgressions, and the house of *Iacob* their sinnes. Finally, when they were thus generally prophane, as *to hate the good, to love the evill*, and were risen to all this height of impiety mentioned, yet they used still in regard of their outward religion

Esay 3. 8, 9.

Esay 58. 2. Even then would they make shewes of seeking God even in fasting.

Esay 58. 1. And then to leane on the Lord. *Mich.* 3. 11.

religion and ſhewes to leane on the Lord [to make their boaſt of him] and ſay, *Is not the Lord amongſt us? no evill can come upon us.*

Glorying that no evill could come on them.

Vengeance.] Now for the vengeance on this their outragious profaneneſſe, as the Lord denounceth many terrible woes by *Eſay*, in his 5. Chapter, againſt every degree of it almoſt a ſeverall woe; ſo by *Habakkuk* after he hath ſet downe the ſinne, as we heard before, he bids them, *Behold amongſt the heathen* [whether any ſuch thing was done amongſt them] *as that they ſhould ſo ſpoile and uſe violence, and diſſolve the law, that the wicked ſhould compaſſe about the righteous, and wrong judgement ſhould ſo proceed*, as in the verſe before. And bids them *to regard, and wonder, and marvell, for that he would worke a worke in their daies which they would not beleeve though it was told them*, [as they would not beleeve the Prophets to repent at their admonitions.] And what was that? *That he would raiſe up the Chaldean a furious nation, terrible and dreadfull, to ſpoile and poſſeſſe their houſes and goods, as they had ſpoiled the poore. And their dignitie and judgement ſhould proceed of themſelves*, [that is, the enemies when they came ſhould judge and deale with them at their pleaſures, and none to controule them, even as they had dealt with the poore.] *And ſo they ſhould mocke and ſcorne the chiefe of them, and deride every ſtrong hold, and gather duſt and take it*, [make rampers of duſt and take their ſtrongeſt places.] And as they had incouraged themſelves to evill to deſtroy the poore; *ſo theſe enemies ſhould take courage* [to wit to their utter deſtruction] *and tranſgreſſe and doe wickedly, imputing all this their power to their God* [like as theſe of *Iudah* had ſtill leaned on their God in all their wickedneſſe, & therein imputed al their power to him.]

Habac. 1. 5. This plague of ſpoiling them by the Caldean, which they ſhould not beleeve till it came.

Verſ. 7.

Who ſhould judge and deale with them as they had done to the poore: even all as they liſt.

Verſ. 10. Scorning thē. And incouraging themſelves to their deſtruction. Imputing all their power to their God.

Eſay 5. 26, 27, &c.

Ioel 2. 11.

The Prophet *Eſay* likewiſe joyning in the very ſame judgement, in that 5. Chapter, where he hath ſet downe all thoſe woes againſt that their exceeding profaneneſſe, ſheweth how the Lord would ſet up a ſigne unto the nations a farre off, and would hiſſe unto them, and they ſhould come haſtily with ſpeed, and ſo deſcribeth, like as the Prophet *Ioel* doth alſo, both the fierce enemie, and the terrible manner of their comming, and their crueltie. And ſo much for the vengeance threatned for this increaſe of their prophaneneſſe herein.

Application.]

Application. To returne to our selves in this in like manner, and to search and trie our selves before the Lord come to search us, whether this profanenesse be amongst us or no. Surely the Lord need not to search this with lights as he threatneth Ierusalem. It were well if it did not shew it selfe in every towne, and almost in every little village: for what small village is there, unlesse want or beggerie doe hinder, or some rare man for countenance or command, wherein there are not some, if not many of these good fellowes, who make this all their glory, to swagger and to brave it out, to drinke and to sweare, in despight of Minister, officer, or whosoever shall admonish them? who say they will live as they list; yea, who dare controule or speake against them for it? Take any one, almost, of these deboshed men, and apply all these parts of this most horrible profanenesse unto them; even these for which the Lord cannot spare a people, to be so contemned by them; and consider well whether you may not finde all of them in them, though haply not in the like measure, yet in some degree.

Application. To search our selves before the Lord come to search us.

What Towne free from such as have gloried to be termed swaggerers or the like?

And which of them walketh not in some measure in these steps of profanenesse?

Which of them doth not ordinarily oppose himselfe against the Lord and his Spirit, whereby he seekes to draw them to repentance, that he might spare us? who amongst them doth not seeke to suppresse all true power of godlinesse, although they will brag that they serve the Lord, and love his Gospell as well as the best: and sometimes it may be will seeme very earnest as they, in their ceremoniall and outward observations? which of them is there whose words and workes are not against the Lord and against all true feare of his name, chiefly in their meetings wherein they commonly solace themselves in these things?

1. Opposing themselves against the Lord and his Spirit.
Seeking to suppresse all true power of godlinesse.
Esay 3.8.

Doe not such use all devices by drinking and swaggering to put out utterly all feare of the Lord and of his judgements? Doe they not daily hale on all iniquitie with coards of vanitie, make a trade and occupation of practising almost all kinde of abominations with a high hand, by all meanes drawing and inforcing one another thereunto? Doe not these generally speake good of evill, and evill of good; when they dare set themselves to maintaine all their evill waies; and withall to speake against all the contrarie good waies of God, even against all true obedience and feare of the Lord?

Esay 5.11,12,13.
Esay 5.19.

Esay 5.20.
Speaking good of evill, and evill of good.

Their phraſes witneſſes.

Ieremy 3.13.
Eſay 28.15.

Glorying of pouring downe ſtrong drinke, ſwearing, whoring.
Eſay 5.23.
To juſtifie the wicked.

Micb, 3.2.
To condemne the good.

Studying to make them as ſignes.
Eſay 8.18.
Jerem 15.20.
Raiſing miſchiefe againſt them by any ſuggeſtions.

Theſe the only good fellowes, men of renown as before the floud.

The ſpeech turned to theſe men, if to ſave ſome of them.

Have they not moſt odious phraſes deviſed to this end, to make all true pietie baſe and contemptible? and doe they not practiſe theſe in every place, that they might grow common in the land, and all ſound feare of the Lord to become odious? Doe not all theſe generally ſcorne all holy admonition? Are they not wiſer in their owne conceits than the beſt Preacher of them all? Come they not commonly to this fearefull height of intolerable profanenеſſe to glory in their ſhame; of their might to poure downe ſtrong drink, and how much they have devoured, which would have refreſhed many a fainting ſoule: yea, in their ſwearing and their whoring? And do they not ſet their faces againſt heaven, and bend their tongues to juſtifie all the wicked, even the vileſt of the earth; yea, ſuch as we may wonder how the earth can beare them any longer; eſpecially, if they be ſuch as doe ſo as themſelves doe? And contrarily to condemne all Gods ſervants be they never ſo harmeleſſe? Doe they not ſo far hate all that have any ſhew of goodneſſe, as that it may appeare that they ſtudie day and night, how to deviſe ſlanders, and to caſt all reproach upon them, to make them as ſignes to be talked againſt, even all who will not run with them to the ſame exceſſe of riot? Is it not their felicitie if they can raiſe any miſchiefe againſt them, by any kinde of ſuggeſtions, no matter how untrue ſoever they be, to incenſe all in authoritie againſt every one that feareth the Lord; yea, to thinke that herein they doe very well and God good ſervice, if they could ſpoile them, their wives and children, and deſtroy all ſuch out of the earth? And yet are not theſe the only men, the men of renowne and fame in every place, where they are, as thoſe Giants before the floud? Such as thoſe were by whom the earth was ſo corrupted in the beginning, that the Lord could endure the noiſomeneſſe thereof no longer, but it muſt be purged with the floud of waters, ſweeping away both man and beaſt, and all the filth of it, as it came to paſſe.

But the evidence hereof being as the Sunne at the noone day, give me leave to ſpeake unto you, only in tender love and dutie, to try if it ſhall be the rich mercy and good pleaſure of the Lord, that I may helpe to ſave if it were but ſome; yea, if but to pull one ſoule of you out of the fire of hell.

Oh

Oh you whoſe conſciences doe tell you that the Lord hath met with your ſinne, and diſcovered your filthineſſe before the whole world: and that therefore you are thoſe profane ones, unto whom the Lord ſpeakes now, in all theſe places of his holy word. Is it not a wonder that you having thouſands of woes belonging unto you and compaſſing you about, yea, continually dogging you at the heeles (as if either you reade or heare Gods word, eſpecially that 5. of *Eſay*, you cannot but feele) that yet you ſhould be ſo merry and jocund as the only men alive? Is it not ſtrange, that you ſhould hereby provoke the Lord & tempt him every day, to raiſe up and to ſend againſt this your owne native countrie, the bloudy Babylonian, a terrible and mercileſſe generation to ſpoile and to poſſeſſe, not only the reſt of your nation which ought to be ſo deare unto you, but even your owne houſes and goods: to mocke and to ſcorne you, and in all things to deale ſo with you as you have dealt with the Lord, and his poore ſervants; and yet you to be ſenſleſſe of it?

A wonder that ſuch profane men can be merry.

Who provoke God every day to their owne deſtruction, and of the whole nation.

Is it not a marvellous judgement of God upon you, that you ſhould harten and incourage the enemies of God, unto your own endleſſe deſtruction, by ſhewing them your extreme contempt of his Majeſtie, and the vile account that you make of his religion and ſervants; and that therefore his preſence and protection muſt needs be driven from us, and he become our enemie. As all the world ſaw that you had done it before this, had not the Lord beene infinite in compaſſion; and yet your hearts never relent or feare? And is not this a greater wonder, that you ſhould ſtill goe on in this courſe, and be much worſe than ever heretofore, without hope of reſtraint, after ſuch a faire warning given you, without any further conſideration of it? Surely it is a wonder of wonders, yet nothing elſe but the juſt vengeance of the Lord, and the dreadfull execution of that righteous judgement upon us; even that threatned by *Habakkuk*. At which the Lord bids to behold among the heathen and to wonder: for that the Lord would worke a worke, which they ſhould not beleeve though it were told them. What things could ever be told us more plainly, than that the Lord as he hath long, ſo ſtill threatneth, to plague his Church by the Babylonian the bloudy treacherous enemie, unleſſe ſhe repent ſpeedily? But becauſe

That they ſhould encourage and ſtrengthen the enemie.

Yea, go on and be much worſe without any conſideration. This the execution of the vengeance threatned by Habakkuk. Hab.1.5.

That we ſhould not beleeve the judgement threatned towards us.

though never ſo plainly denounced.

The horrible judgement upon all prophane deſpiſers of the Goſpell, not to beleeve any judgement towards them.

This judgement after a ſort effected.

Their unplacableneſſe.

They not afraid to publiſh and profeſſe their purpoſes.

All of us have knowne theſe things.

But have no feare to ſeeke to prevent them.

Elſe we would not nouriſh them in our boſomes cauſing them to multiply.

becauſe we will not beleeve the good word of the Goſpell of Ieſus Chriſt, to obey it and to walke in the light of it, as the children of the light, therefore doth the Lord ſend this palpable blindneſſe, that we have not beene able to ſee our owne ruine ruſhing upon us, without our repentance. Becauſe theſe prophane ones have uſed all devices to put out that glorious light of the Goſpell, which hath ſometimes ſhined ſo bright upon them, that it hath aſtoniſhed them with her glory, therefore hath the Lord wrought this ſtrange worke in theſe our daies, that none of our deſpiſers ſhould beleeve the vengeance of the Lord; no though we had it not only foretold ſo many waies and ſo plainly, but alſo although we ſaw it after a ſort effected before our faces accordingly; and that in a more terrible manner, than ever formerly we could conceive. And albeit all ſorts know infallibly that our enemies can never give over, untill they have wrought their deſires. For beſides their deadly malice with the increaſe thereof, and their rage to ſet up their Idolatrie againe, declared in their excommunications, their helliſh ſtratagems, and all other meanes, they are not afraid to publiſh it to all the world, what authoritie their Popes have over all Chriſtian Kings, Princes, and their ſubjects; and what all are bound to doe for furthering the Catholike cauſe: evidently thereby intimating their hearts, and that they wait but for their day, their fitteſt opportunitie.

All of us can ſometimes talke of theſe things, and avouch them to be ſo, and ſeeme to have an indignation againſt that rebellious and perfidious religion; or at leaſt we could have done ſo: yet ſo heavy and ſo ſevere hath the ſpirituall judgement of the Lord beene upon us, that it is evident we have had no right feare of it, nor any ſenſe or power to ſeeke to prevent the ſame. For otherwiſe we would not by all meanes have ſo nouriſhed theſe ſerpents in our boſomes, and by our extreme contempt of all pietie, have cauſed them ſo to increaſe, through a deteſtation of us & of the Goſpel of Chriſt, as if it were a cauſe of our licentiouſneſſe, and thus to ſpread themſelves over the face of our land, to be ready againſt the day of Gods vengeance, to execute their cruell rage, and all their wils upon us, and we our ſelves by our outragious profaneneſſe to incourage them hereunto daily.

But what will you doe in the day of the Lords anger, if he ſhall in his wrath let them obtaine their deſires, and prevaile in ſome one of their bloudy deſignes? whither will you flie then? will you thinke to runne to him, againſt whom you have ſet your ſelves to fight, contrary to the ſhining light of your owne conſciences? To him whoſe feare you have ſought to drive out of your hearts, and out of the hearts of all others? To him whom you have by all meanes ſought to provoke by your iniquities, which you have ſo haled on? To him of whoſe good waies you have ſpoken ſo contemptibly, all whoſe mercies you have ſo abuſed, whoſe admonitions you have ſo ſcorned? How can you imagine ever to finde any mercy with him then, whoſe ſervice and ſervants you have condemned and hated, and made it your felicitie to revile and raile upon, and ſo to caſt upon him all poſſible ſhame? When your conſcience ſhall tell you, that you have ſtudied to make the Lord himſelfe odious, with the Magiſtrate; by notorious ſlanders againſt his poore ſervants, whoſe utter deſtruction and rooting out, you have uſed to contrive and practiſe both night and day, though under other pretences? Can you poſſibly looke towards him, who commeth againſt you of purpoſe to take vengeance? Muſt you not then of neceſſitie flie from his dreadfull and angrie face, and runne into the holes of the rocks, and caves of the earth, if there you could hide your ſelves that his vengeance could not overtake you?

The caſe of prophane perſons in the day of Gods vengeance.

No flying to God againſt whom they have foughten.

Oh but you will flye to the enemie, you ſhall finde favour with them! But doe you not remember what the Lord hath told you, that the enemie is mercileſſe? Call but to minde the pouder furnace! Are they not moreover the Lords executioners, whom he himſelfe raiſeth up and ſendeth againſt you eſpecially, of all other; whom your intolerable wickedneſſe hath continually hartned to the utter deſtruction of this whole Realme, becauſe by you God muſt needs be grieved, and after a ſort expelled and driven out from amongſt us; that at that day it cannot be thought, that ever he will any more fight for us.

No flying to the enemie.

But be it ſo that God ſtill put off that day, (to which end we labour and cry day and night) yet what will you doe at the day of death, which is every houre ſeizing on you at your heeles? when you muſt be brought before him whom you have ſo deſpiſed?

Their caſe at the day of death.

At the judgement.

ſpiſed ? when you will wiſh that ten thouſand deaths could make an end of you ? What will you doe when he ſhall come with his thouſand thouſands of glorious Angels to take vengeance of al his enemies, when they muſt ſee him whoſe tongues have pierced him, as the ſpeares of the ſouldiers : when all thoſe giants who have ſought to outface him, be they never ſo great, ſhall not only ſeeke to hide themſelves from his preſence, but

Apoc. 6.

alſo cry to the hils and to the mountaines, *Fall on us, daſh us in peeces, ſo that we may never come before him, whom we have deſpiſed: For the great day of his wrath is come, and who can ſtand!*

Their happineſſe who can take the time of mercy.

Happy therefore and ten thouſand times happy is that ſoule, that ſhall have grace but to ſee his rebellion, to bewaile it in time ; and caſt downe himſelfe at the footſtoole of Ieſus Chriſt. For yet whilſt it is called to day, his chiefe glory is in ſhewing mercy, even to the greateſt of all ſinners, that ſhall ſo ſeeke him in time. But when this day of grace is once paſt, his glory ſhall be then declared in the juſt and terrible execution of vengeance without any pitty, upon all thoſe who have deſperatly deſpiſed the time of mercy.

Concluſion.

And hitherto of the generall profaneneſſe in our land angring the Lord to the uttermoſt ; and what need we have for it only to watch and pray, yea to faſt and cry loud unto the Lord ; and for every prophane ſinner to humble himſelfe, ſtripping him of his vanities, and putting on ſackcloth and aſhes.

Thus much alſo for the firſt kinde of their apoſtaſie whereunto they fell. Now to proceed to the ſecond.

Abomination 32.

The Idolatrie of Iudah haſtening her Captivitie.

TO come to the ſecond kinde of their apoſtaſie provoking the Lord. The Holy Ghoſt oft complaines of them, that there was in them a ſtrange inclination to Idolatry, to runne after other gods, and a marvellous proneneſſe ever to ſtart away from the Lord, or at leaſt from his pure and ſincere worſhip, to worſhip him according to the inventions of men.

Covenant.] Whereas their hearts ought to have beene only ſet upon him, becauſe he had choſen them out of all the world *and maried them unto himſelfe, made them as a thing hallowed unto him, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt with ſo ſtrong a hand: whom they firſt followed in the wilderneſſe in the love of their mariage, when they went after him in a land that was not ſowen*, as *Ieremie* ſpeaks. And ſecondly, whereas to this end the Lord had enjoyned them theſe things: Firſt to worſhip him only according to his word, and therefore not to ſuffer any kinde of image for religious uſe, nor the likeneſſe of any thing in heaven or earth to teach them his worſhip by, but only thoſe things which he had commanded and given unto them: And had alſo ſtrictly charged them, that there ſhould not be ſo much as the leaſt ſignification of any Idolatrie or falſe worſhip in all their land: that they ſhould not keepe ſo much as any one monument thereof, nor cuſtome of Idolaters, nor other thing which might keepe a remembrance or call to minde the former Idolatry or falſe worſhip, or the worſhip of the heathen that were about them. He had alſo ſtraightly commanded to deface utterly and by all meanes to raze out, and with all warineſſe to ſhun whatſoever might be an occaſion to inſnare them in the leaſt ſuperſtition or falſe worſhip, as the very familiaritie and unneceſſary traffique with Idolaters, and therefore he had oft moſt ſeverely puniſhed the ſeeking helpe of them, the joyning with them and favouring of them. This he had done, that all might ſee how jealous he was of his glory and pure worſhip, and that he could not endure any token of giving his love and honour unto others, but would puniſh their ſinne unto the third and fourth generation, of thoſe that hated him in ſo worſhipping. And finally he had injoyned them, that they ſhould make open proteſtation againſt all idolatrie, though in the very enemies land. Like as ſome ſuch he had ever in the worſt times of all; his ſeven thouſand that never bowed knee to *Baal*: that kept themſelves from the leaſt ſigne of approbation of any ſtrange worſhip; by theſe to condemne the reſt.

Tranſgreſſion.] Notwithſtanding all this, the Lord exceedingly complaines and oft denounceth this vengeance of the Captivitie againſt them, for that extreme corruption that was in their hearts,

Covenant. Their hearts ought to have beene only ſet upon the Lord, who had maried them unto himſelfe. *Ierem.2.2.3.* And they to have worſhipped him only, according to his word.

Deut.7.25,26. & 12.4. 29,30. Not retaining the leaſt ſhew of Idolatrie. *Eſay 30.23.* To have taken away utterly each occaſion thereof. *Deut.7. 2,3,4,5. 25,26, 12.4. 19. 30.* He had plagued them for theſe ſinnes. *2 Chron.19.2.* Injoyning thē to make open proteſtation againſt all Idolatrie in the very enemies land. *Ierem.10.11. 1 King.19.18.*

Tranſgreſſiō. That there was in them a very generall incli-

nation to run a whoring after it notwithstanding. *Hezekiah* raised up to deface it.

hearts, to turne away from him and to runne a whoring after Idols. To omit the Idolatrie of all former times, which notwithstanding the Lord did plague also in this Captivitie; and to come to the daies of worthy *Hezekiah*. First, God raised him up in an Idolatrous time, utterly to deface and to destroy al Idolatrie out of the land, with all the monuments and instruments thereof, that all hereby might be convinced. Insomuch as he tooke away the very brazen serpent, because it had beene superstitiously abused, and was become a snare to the people, though it was of a most holy institution.

2 *Kings* 18.4.

The zeale of the people in destroying it. The Lords admirable favour to *Hezekiah* & Iudah thereupon.

Moreover he wonderfully stirred up the hearts of his people likewise, to declare their zeale in the destroying of Idolatrie; and did for this cause admirably shew his favour unto *Hezekiah*, and his presence and mercy towards his people in his time; both in the overthrow of proud *Zenacheribs* army, and in the lengthning the daies of *Hezekiah*, so openly declared by the going backe of the Sunne, that it was famous in other countries, and that the feare of them fell upon the countries about. Yet when *Manasseh* his sonne went backe to restore Idolatrie, and to destroy Gods true worship, the same people were as ready thereunto as he. Insomuch as they fell to be more vile than the heathen, whom the Lord had destroied before them. For this the Lord brought *Manasseh* into Captivitie, even into fetters and into chaines, and let him be carried into Babel, that there he might learne to know what it was to serve the Lord, and what it was to serve Idols; and that in him and in their miseries all might see their fearefull sinne and turne unto him. But in his tribulation the Lord humbles him, makes him to see and to confesse his sinne, and to seeke his face. And then he brings him backe into his owne land, and there causeth him to deface againe that vile Idolatrie which he had formerly set up. Lastly, when after him Idolatrie began to be set up againe by wicked *Amon* his sonne, the Lord soone takes him away and raiseth up that holy *Iosiah*, who caused a most thorow reformation, and cleansed all the parts of his dominions of that abominable Idolatrie to the uttermost of his power. And together with that good King he stirs up againe the hearts of the people, to deface and abolish utterly all the remainders of that revived Idolatrie, and

Their relapse with *Manasseh*. 2 *Chron.* 33. 3,9.

Falling to be worse than the heathen. *Manasseh* led captive for this: his repentance and destroying Idolatrie againe.

2 *Chron.* 33.22.
2 *Chron.* 34.3.
Iosiah raised up to worke a thorow reformation.
With a most strange detestation of Idolatrie.

and whatſoever could be found, with ſo ſtrange a deteſtation, that they brake the Images to powder, and ſtrowed the powder upon the graves of thoſe that had ſacrificed unto them. And alſo burnt the bones of the Prieſts upon the altars, and did whatſoever might cauſe all poſteritie to abhorre Idolatrie. Beſides all this, this worthie *Ioſiah* renued moſt ſolemnly the Covenant with the Lord, for all his Subjects to worſhip the Lord only according to his will, and cauſed all who were found in Ieruſalem and Benjamin to ſtand to it; compelling all to ſerve the Lord their God.

2 *Chron.* 34. 4,5.

Verſ. 5.

2 *Chron.* 34. 30, 31, 32. And a ſolemne renuing their Covenant, compelling all to ſtand to it.

Thus the Lord by all meanes convinced them, ſhewing them his indignation againſt Idolatrie, and the abomination thereof, to turne them ever unfainedly unto him; yet the Holy Ghoſt complaines of them, even in thoſe daies, that they did not turne unto him with all their hearts, but fainedly. The Lord ſent alſo moe of his faithfull ſervants the Prophets, than ever he had ſent before; and cauſed them to preach with more diligence and power, than ever in any former age. *Ieremie* himſelfe continuing for ſome fortie yeares before this Captivitie, ſtil warning them, even from the thirteenth yeere of *Ioſiah*, firſt unto the fourth yeere of *Iehoiakim*, and after unto the eleventh of *Zedekiah*, riſing early and ſpeaking, as he himſelfe tels them. So the Lord ſaith, *that he ſent unto them all his ſervants the Prophets, riſing early and ſending*; meaning that he never ſent ſo many before, nor with ſuch induſtrie and in that powerfull manner, but they would not heare, nor incline their eares to obey. Amongſt other things which theſe Prophets warned them of, ſeeking to turne them that they might abide in the land, and eſcape the plagues denounced, this was ever one principall; That they ſhould not goe after other gods to ſerve and worſhip them; ſo to provoke the Lord to anger with the workes of their hands. But they would not heare, but provoked him to their deſtruction. This Idolatrie was generally in the hearts of the moſt, and this was practiſed ſecretly all the daies of *Ioſiah*, notwithſtanding all his good lawes againſt it. Therefore the Lord would have us to obſerve it, that there is no particular ſinne which the laſt Prophers doe ſo beat upon, as theſe two, their rage for Idolatrie, and their vaine confidence in themſelves, in their owne imaginations

The Lord by all meanes convincing them & forcing them to turne. Yet they turned but fainedly. *Ier.* 3. 10. *Ier.* 25. 3, 4.

The Lord ſent them moe Prophets, and with more power than ever before. *Ier.* 25. 3, 4.

Verſ. 5.

This was one principall ſin whereof they did ever warne them. *Zeph.* 1. 4, 5, 6.

imaginations and wisdome, and in their affinitie with their Idolatrous neighbours round about. And still more as their destruction more approched.

Idolatrie practised secretly in all *Iosiahs* daies.

Hence it was that in *Iosiahs* daies and after, when they could not have their wils to have Idolatrie publiquely set up, yet notwithstanding (besides the remnant of *Baal*, that is, those old Idolaters whom *Iosiah* by all his wisdome and care could not root out) they had also their Chemarims, the chimney chaplaines of Baal, like our Priests and Iesuites, sacrificing in their secret corners, whom the Lord threats to cut off. They had in like manner such as were halfe worshippers of God, halfe Idolaters, who were in shew conformable to Gods religion and Covenant, because the good King and lawes were so, but in heart most wretched Idolaters.

There still remained the remnants of Baal. *Zeph.* 1.4.

The Chemarims.

Those who sware by the Lord and Malcom.

And alwaies the neerer unto the vengeance, still raged they more violently, as was shewed. Which furie of theirs, the Spirit of the Lord by the Prophet *Ezekiel* setteth out in most strange speeches, comparing them unto shamelesse strumpets, to shew the odiousnesse and abomination thereof. This is one part of their unsatiable rage, that besides their doating on the Princes and guise of the Babylonians, they (as was touched upon another occasion) sent for some of their Idolatrous Priests from Babylon, and other places, to teach them the manner of the worship of their Idols. And these they received, even the very basest of them, with all reverence & pompe, rather as Gods from heaven, or at least as great Princes, than as such slavish Idolaters.

Idolaters compared unto shameleſſe strumpets. *Ezek.* 23.

Sending for their lovers, *viz.* Priests to teach them the worship of their Idols. *Vers.* 40, 41, 42.

To draw towards an end of this point; The Lord presently before this vengeance and in the beginning of this vision, reveales unto *Ezekiel* sundrie secret and most odious abominations, for which he could not spare them. Amongst others, he shewes unto him what a generall declining there was unto most horrible Idolatrie, even amongst the rulers: for being in some distresse or in feare of the enemie, in stead of seeking to the Lord their God, they sought to the gods of all countries about. These they had painted upon the wals in one of the secret chambers within the Temple. To these the elders burne incense, (as it is most like) that they might deliver them, seeing that their owne God the God of Israel regarded them not; he had forsaken the

Their rulers fall to most horrible Idolatrie in secret as the Lord shewes *Ezekiel*. *Ezek.* 8. 8, 9, 10, 11.

earth

earth as they complaine. He did not now regard to heare them, as they had not regarded to heare him when he called. Thus they closely practised most execrable Idolatrie in the darke in the secret chambers of the Priests, every one in the chamber of his imagerie. *Vers.* 12.

By which place of *Ezekiel* and by sundrie other reasons, we may observe by the way, that it seemeth to be most cleere, that the outward forme of the religion and true worship of God continued amongst them after the daies of *Iosiah*, to the very day of their finall desolation. For else, why would the ancients have done this in secret, and in the darke, remote from the eies of all? How else was it possible, but that this their wickednesse must needs have beene knowne unto the Prophet; which it is more than probable, it was not, but only by this secret discoverie from the Lord, for otherwise why should the Lord thus shew it to him by this vision? How should *Ieremie* have beene in such inward favour with the King, and his imprisonment only for that he did denounce the vengeance of God to come upon them by the Babylonian, and exhorted them to yeeld themselves unto the Babylonians, according to the will of the Lord? Moreover, how could they have had so solemne a fast by proclamation, when *Baruch* read first that prophecie of *Ieremie* unto all the people, that came out of all Iudah, and that in the house of the Lord? Secondly, that he read it before the Princes, and chiefe rulers of the kingdome; and that the Princes caused that it should be read before the King himselfe; which things could not have beene, unlesse the outward forme of the religion of the Lord had beene continued still amongst them. Only there was that fearefull declining and doating after Idolatrie which we heard, and much practise secretly, and that they had set it up in their hearts; yea, they began to thinke that the daies were better in those times of Idolatrie; as those who were carried away into Egypt did openly professe. That then *when they offered to the Queene of heaven, they had plentie, but since they had scarsenesse of all things, and had beene consumed by the sword and by famine*: so that they then imputed all their troubles, and other evils, to the religion of the Lord; that all things had gone ill with them, since the time of Gods religion so restored.

Though the outward forme of Gods religion may seeme to have continued unto their last desolation without any publike Idolatrie.

Ier. 36. 3, 4, 17.

Ier. 36. 9. *A publike fast proclaimed by* Iehoiakim.

Ezek. 14. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

Ier. 44. 17, 18.

Vengeance.]

Vengeance denounced.
To confound them for this sinne, to cause them to runne into the holes to hide them.
Esay 2.19.
To cause them to curse their Gods.
Esay 2.20.
Esay 8.21,22.
But finde no comfort.
To raise their lovers against them, which should use them as strumpets.
*Ezek.*23. 24,25.

And make their fornications to cease.

*Vers.*30.

To plague them from Egypt and Babylon.

Application.

Vengeance.] To come to the vengeance. To runne thorow the particular places would be over-tedious; therefore to point at it shortly. Sometimes the Lord denounceth that they should be confounded for the places where they had committed their Idolatrie; they should be glad to seeke the very holes of the rockes and caves of the earth, where they had worshipped their Idols, to hide themselves from his fierce vengeance, when he came to destroy the earth. *That they should cast away their Idols to the moules and to the batts, and even curse their gods, when they saw they could not helpe them. That looking to heaven, they should finde no comfort; or towards the earth, yet they should see nothing but vexation, anguish, trouble & darkneſſe.* Somtimes, that because they chose these, rejecting him, they should have enough of the service of these in their enemies land. And yet more to shew how his soule did loath their whoredomes, he threats that he would raise against them their lovers, the enemies on whom they had so doated, to wit the Babylonians, Chaldeans, and others, and they should use them as whores, *cutting off their noses and their eares, and the remnant should fall by the sword.* And they should carry away their sonnes and their daughters, and the residue should be devoured with fire. And that they should strip them out of their clothes, and take away their faire jewels, and so make their fornication to cease out of the land. That they should handle them despightfully and leave them naked, and that the shame of their fornications should be discovered. This the Lord threats to doe, because they had gone a whoring after the heathen, and beene polluted with their Idols. And very oft he denounceth, that because they had so doated upon the Babylonian and upon the Idols of Egypt and Babylon, as that they would make such affinitie with them, and receive their worship, and had also such a confidence in them, that therefore he would plague them chiefly from Egypt and Babylon; like as it came to passe; for first they were subdued by the Egyptian, within three moneths of the death of *Iosiah*, and afterwards by Babylon, overthrow after overthrow, and captivitie after captivitie, untill their full desolation was accomplished.

Application.] To returne to our selves, and to aske of our own hearts, how far we have gone herein to anger the Lord. First, for

for the Covenant, we know it is ours as well as theirs, and that our holy God requires as pure a worſhip of us, as ever he did of them, and as much deteſts all Idolatry and falſe worſhip amongſt us, as ever he did amongſt them. Secondly, we all know, that God as graciouſly raiſed up to us his worthie ſervants in the daies of moſt palpable Idolatry, one after another to deſtroy Idolatry out of the Land, as ever he did to them. And did moreover as fully diſcover the abomination of that Romiſh Idolatry, making it as odious amongſt us, as ever he did that Idolatry in Iudah, if not much more. Thirdly, that he hath ſhewed as marvellous tokens of his favour ſince that time, both towards our Princes and our Land, even towards us all, in ſundry moſt miraculous deliverances, as ever to them; and hath as much threatned us by theſe, as ever he did them. Only he hath hitherto ſhewed us more mercie, in ſaving us from that which they felt, and which hath beene oft ſo neere unto us. But if he ſhall come now to examine us, may he not finde as juſt matter of complaint againſt us, as ever againſt Iudah in the dayes of *Ioſiah* eſpecially? May we not rightly thinke a great part of this complaint to be made even againſt us? Are not we the men (I meane very many of us) of whom the Lord complaines, that we have turned to him but fainedly? Are not we thoſe to whom he hath ſent farre moe of his Prophets, ſince the diſcoverie and overthrow of that horrible Idolatry, and men furniſhed with more excellent gifts, yea more painfull and powerfull, than ever in former age ſince the time of the Apoſtles? May he not herein be ſaid to have ſent unto us all his ſervants the Prophets, riſing earely and ſpeaking, crying out againſt that accurſed Idolatry of Rome, and our doting upon it, but we would not heare nor incline our eare? Have we not in all theſe dayes (wherein the Lord hath by his anointed ſervants cauſed his owne truth alone to be maintained and profeſſed) had yet ſtill a remnant of *Baal* our old Idolaters?

And have we not had the Chemarims, Seminaries, and Ieſuites ſacrificing to *Baal* in every corner? Have we not had multitudes of thoſe who ſweare by the Lord and Malcom, profeſſing Gods religion at the Church, and Idolaters at home, or at leaſt in heart, as all our Church-Papiſts? And are not all theſe ſorts

much deteſts Idolatry now as then.

Having alſo raiſed up ſundry of his worthie ſervants to deſtroy it, as *King Henry*, *King Edward*, *Queene Elizabeth*, *King Iames*.

Diſcovering the abomination of it.

Shewing alſo many tokens of his favor ſince.

Alſo threatning us by them.

Whether he may not as juſtly complaine of us in all theſe.

Turning to him fainedly.

All his Prophets ſent to us.

But we would not heare.

Still retaining a remnant of *Baal*.

Romiſh Chemarims.

Thoſe who ſweare by God and Malcom.

sorts much increased of late time, as hath beene manifested sundrie waies? Have we not doted after them, to seeke for those that might teach us the manner of their service? How else could there be so many of their Priests entertained and harboured in everie corner of our Land, and received with as great preparation and honour as ever those Idolaters amongst them? Finally, doth not the world know, and doe not all the sound lovers of the Gospell mourne for it, that they have in all this time, inchanted so many of principall note, not only to have their Idols in the darke, but also to make a profession of their religion, and to account it their glorie, as all our professed Recusants doe?

Doting after them and sending for them to teach us.

Entertaining them with honour.

Whereby they have bewitched so many of principall note.

All our Recusants.

In which abomination we certainly doe farre exceed them in the daies of *Iosiah*; in whose time after the thorow reformation, it is not like that any durst openly make profession, but of the Lords religion alone: for so the Holy Ghost saith expresly; That after the finding of that authenticall copie of the booke of the Law, which had beene so long lost, and upon due consideration of the anger of God for the transgressions, *King Iosiah stood by his pillar, and there solemnely renued the Covenant before the Lord, to walke with him and keepe his commandements, and that he would accomplish the words of the Covenant written in that Booke.* And moreover the Holy Ghost saith, That he caused all that were found in Ierusalem and *Benjamin* to stand to it. Yea, that he compelled all who were found in Israel to serve the Lord their God. So that all his daies they turned not backe from the Lord God of their fathers. Whereby it may seeme that there were not any that durst make profession of any Idolatrie all his daies, after this thorow reformation, but all did outwardly serve the Lord. And yet we see that his terrible vengeance came upon them presently after the daies of *Iosiah*, partly for that Idolatrie which had beene before, and more specially for that which was committed then secretly: and also because so many of them had set up their stumbling blocks in their hearts; and thought so highly of the times of Idolatrie, and so basely of the religion and truth of the Lord, which he had vouchsafed to restore unto them againe.

In which sinne we seeme to exceed them far in the daies of *Iosiah*.

2 *Chr.* 31, 32, 33. For *Iosiah* did not only solemnly renew the Covenant,

2 *Chr.* 34. 32, 33. But caused all to stand to it.

And compelled all to serve the Lord.

Yet the vengeance came on them for this sinne with others.

Alas then if the case be so with us, that our sinne even in

in this Idolatry, which the Lord so hates, be above theirs in those daies of *Iosiah*, chiefly in regard of so many amongst us, making such profession of that religion, more than they had, so farre as I am able to conjecture; and if the Lord have many a time threatned us by those proud Babylonians, on whose Idolatry we have so set our hearts, if he have also given us more warning of the spirituall Babylon, than ever he gave them of that; not only by his Word more clearely, but also by setting before our faces their cruell and mercilesse devices against us, and yet so many of us still more doat upon them than ever heretofore, what can we looke for? what can be the end, but that the Lord must needs make them the rod of his anger to us, as Babylon to this people? Oh that ever we should be so enchaunted againe, as to be so inamored with that strumpet, and to thirst after that golden cup of her abominations; after that the Lord hath so disclosed her filthinesse, the deadly poison of her cup, and her thirsting after our bloud, so as never any thing was made more palpable! That so many of us should thus rage for these againe, after that the Lord had so cast the proud strumpet from her Throne, and caused us to depart out of Babylon, because of her abominations and for feare of her torment!

Our sin herein greater than theirs in the dayes of *Iosiah*, so farre as we can conjecture.

And our warnings more manifest.

Whereby our judgement is aggravated. *Apoc.* 17. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Oh yee that are seduced or stand in a mammering, thinke but of these things following, and consider well what you will answer to them before the high God!

Certain points to be seriously thought of by all the favourers of Popery amongst us, and all who stand in suspence.

First, did ever the whole State of this Nation cast out Poperie at once, without just cause? Or did the whole Land so renounce it, without a most palpable discovery of the filthinesse thereof? Did not the very Idiots and little children see how shamefully they had beene deluded and robbed by all their Masses, Purgatory, Pilgrimages and Pardons, with all kinde of their jugling devices, and how all was but to get money, to make themselves fat, and Lords of all both bodies and soules of men, and that all might be their slaves and vassals? Did we not plainly perceive and acknowledge the vengeance of God most justly come upon all those places called the Religious Houses, the Abbeyes, Frieries and Nunries, for all the abominations committed in them? Was it not notorious that the filthinesse of them was more loathsome and abominable than the sinne of

1.

The occasion and manner of casting Poperie out of the Land.

When all sorts saw how they had beene deluded.

Acknowledged Gods vengeance most just.

Sodome, through their fulneſſe of bread, and that abundance of idleneſſe which was in them? And were they not all red with bloud, with the cruell and unnaturall murders of multitudes of infants, to hide their abominations? Is it not knowne to all the world, I meane, to all who will not be wilfully blinde, that thoſe houſes were nothing but dens of theeves, couſening and robbing the whole Land, and every day by their devices fetching in new ſpoiles; ſo that they had gotten into their hands, moſt of the pleaſanteſt and fatteſt things to uphold their kingdome, and ſupport all their wickedneſſe. If therefore the continuall practiſe of Sodomie, Whoredome, Murder, Lying, Robbing, ſwallowing up whole Nations, and the like, and all under a cloke of devotion and Gods religion, could demonſtrate a religion moſt abominable and accurſed, how can we doubt but this was it? Who can make any queſtion, but that this then amongſt us in England was a chiefe part of that Babylon, the mother of whoredomes and abominations of the earth; and all that pompe and glittering glory in their melodious harmony and ſhining attire like Angels, nothing for moſt part but the allurements of that Whore of Babylon, moſt plainly and lively fore-ſhewed in the Revelation, for all to behold, who will not of purpoſe put out their owne eyes, or blinde-fold themſelves? And yet more to convince the conſciences of every one; Hath not the Lord ſince the fall of this part of Babylon, verified his vengeance threatned, *Babylon is fallen, and is become the habitation of Devils, and the hold of all foule ſpirits?* How many of theſe houſes have there beene which have not beene haunted with Devils in one roome or other thereof, (as the common report hath beene) at leaſt untill ſome profeſſing the religion of the Lord have reſided there; from which time commonly theſe apparitions and terrours have ceaſed.

All imbrued in bloud.

Dennes of theeves robbing the whole Land.

Apoc. 17. 5.

Thoſe houſes habitations of Devils. *Apoc.* 18. 2.

2. The bloud of ſo many learned and moſt holy Martyrs, as *Cranmer*, *Latimer*, *Ridley*,

Secondly, what can you anſwer the Lord, who hath vouchſafed to give you ſo many holy Martyrs moſt learned and renowned witneſſes; which proteſting againſt thoſe abominations of Antichriſt, *have not loved their lives unto the death*, but have with their bloud ſealed their Teſtimonie, for that truth of Ieſus Chriſt, which we profeſſe, and againſt that bloudy Antichriſt and his Idoll-ſervice? To oppoſe their pretended Martyrs

to

to theſe of ours, is moſt void of all colour; whom all men know to have died as traytors, rebels and murderers, not for religion, but for being moſt hainous malefactors, and ſuch as no Law of nations could ſuffer in any Common-wealth, inforced ordinarily by ſome bloudie oathes, to come at the appointment and command of their Governours, to murder our Princes, ſubvert and betray their owne native Countrey, and to draw all to ſedition.

Hooper, Philpot, Bradford, with a cloud of witneſſes. *Anſwer concerning their pretended Martyrs.*

Thirdly, ſo many worthie Preachers as he hath raiſed up in every part of the land, to diſplay and lay open before all mens eyes, the whole myſterie of Antichriſts iniquitie, and to hold forth the glorious light of Chriſts Goſpell, to the convincing of the whole Land, and particularly of the conſciences of every one, who hath heard them, at one time or other.

3. So many worthie Preachers in each part of the Land convincing all.

Fourthly, ſo many learned writers not inferiour to any of former ages, or of all the world, ſo cleerely demonſtrating all the truth of God, and laying open the iniquitie of that Antichriſtian Idolatrie; to whom all men gave place in their times; ſundry of them remaining to this day unanſwered, or without ſo much as any colour or attempt of anſwer in many of their works: as that famous Biſhop *Iewell*, Doctor *Fulke*, Doctor *Whitakers*, Doctor *Raynolds*, Doctor *Bilſon*, Doctor *Abbot*, and many other of our owne nation, to omit all the worthie writers of other Countreyes.

4. So many learned writers unanſwerable.

Fifthly, their *Index expurgatorius*, according to a decree of the Councell of Trent; done ſecretly by authoritie of the Pope, and other their chiefe Governours; part whereof is diſcovered and ſet forth to the view of the world by *Franciſcus Iunius*, wherein they have cunningly deviſed, to make all bookes, which have beene printed by them ſince that time, to ſpeake for themſelves, and againſt us, by putting out ſo farre as they could, whatſoever ſeemes to make againſt Poperie, and for the Goſpell.

5. The diſcoverie of their *Index expurgatorius.*

Sixthly, what can any of you anſwer unto the Lord, who hath diſcovered unto you from time to time, ſo many moſt barbarous and unnaturall cruelties, either done or intended, as were never read or heard of amongſt men of any religion; and eſpecially to be the very fruits of that religion, and the practiſe of their

6. So many diſcoveries of their unnaturall cruelties. Fruits of their religion.

Murdering Princes. Subversion of States.

French massacre.

The Spanish invasion.

The hellish pouder treason.

John 8.44.

The chiefe of them made trumpetters of the abomination of their religion.

[a] *Poperie the principall religion of Sathan under a shew of holinesse.*

John 8.44.

Our Saviours argument most strong against that religion to prove it to be of Sathan.

7.

Their religion teacheth these things, witnesse those evidences which follow in the end of this chapter.

That alone sufficient to cause all not utterly given up to flie out of Babylon.

their owne grounds and prineiples. Such continuall plotting, attempting and practising the murdering of Princes, overthrow of States, butchering even of their owne friends and kinsmen, desolating their native Countreyes. Let that picture of cruelty, the mercilesse bloudie French massacre, (making the rivers red with the bloud of Gods dearest servants, whom the earth was not worthie of) be witnesse hereof. Or that which was so much triumphed of, the outragious, insolent, savage invasion of this our Nation, chiefly managed by her owne children and native subjects. And above all, that most brutish and hellish Powder-treason, unto which no name can ever be devised meet, or able to set forth the nature thereof; so compact of all the principall works of the Devill, lying, murdering, and all kinde of wickednesse; wherein the Lord made themselves to be the trumpetters and publike proclaimers of the abominable iniquitie of that accursed religion; and to shew to all nations, that it is come out of the bottomlesse pit, and [a] the verie principall religion of Satan in all the world, under such a faire shew of holinesse. If our Saviours argument was good against the Iewes, to prove that they were of their father the Devill, because they did the works of their father, to wit, lying and murdering, and the same they would doe; then needs must it be much more true against this religion of Rome, (which teacheth these works of Satan, and thereby only prevaileth) and consequently against all the obstinate professours thereof. And so much the more, as there is no comparison betweene the manner of their equivocating and lying, or the cruelties of their murder, to compare them with the worst which the Iewes ever committed, for which they had farre more colour, and did not so palpably fight against the light.

Seventhly, because they will say, that their religion teacheth not these things; looke but only upon those principall abominations, from which she will not be cleansed nor cured, which that Church of Rome professeth in her doctrine, notably discovered many wayes set downe in the end of this chapter, which may justly cause all men, whom the Lord hath not utterly given up to a reprobate sense, to abhorre the Whore, and to flie out of Babylon. As by the like discoverie of their abominable pra-

ctises

ctiſes and doctrines it began to fall at the firſt, ſo by the ſame the Lord will ruinate it for evermore. Oh that all Gods ſervants would but carefully looke hereunto! And who is there, that ſhall ever be able to ſtand before his glorious Majeſtie, which ſhall but only adjoyne himſelfe to a religion of ſuch abominations, being ſo plainly warned thereof ſo many wayes, and that by the Lord himſelfe, and by ſo infallible meanes.

8. Miraculous deliverances and preſervations of our Princes, religion, and us all, at Spaniſh invaſion.

Eighthly, to omit the ſundrie ſo miraculous deliverances and preſervations of our Princes and nation by the Lord himſelfe; ſometimes fighting for us from heaven by the winds, arming the dumbe creatures to take our parts for our ſafetie and their ruine, as he did for Iſrael in the heart of the ſea. Sometimes immediatly caſting the very feare of Egypt upon them, that not ſo much as a dog ſhould wag his tongue againſt any of Gods ſervants, when their day was come, wherein ſo many of them had ſo long rejoyced to ſatiate themſelves in our bloud, and by the very conceit whereof they had drawne ſo many unto their parts. Sometimes by themſelves (as was touched) to cauſe them to lay open their owne ſhame to all the earth; and in ſtriking at us to give ſo deepe a wound into their owne bowels, as never ſhall be cured I hope, untill it have wrought the utter downfall of Babel.

At the death of Queene *Elizabeth*, and bringing in the Lords anointed amongſt us. Gunpowder treaſon.

9. The bringing the Goſpell againe after Queene *Mary*. The wonderfull preſervation of the Lady *Elizabeth*.

Ninthly, to paſſe over all theſe, and the wonderfull bringing in of the glorious light of the Goſpell againe, after that it was ſo utterly put out, that it was thought to be extinguiſhed for ever; and withall the ſtrange preſervation of that moſt renowned and bleſſed Lady *Elizabeth* in thoſe bloudy daies of Queen *Mary*, conſidering all the plots and intendments againſt her, recorded in that worthy ſtorie of Acts and Monuments.

10. The admirable continuance of the Goſpell ſince, notwithſtanding ſo innumerable ſtratagems. Theſe as infallible arguments of Gods favour and love towards us as theirs towards Iudea.

Tenthly, to pretermit likewiſe the admirable continuance ſince, of that ſhining light of Chriſts Goſpell, without ſhedding the bloud of any of Gods ſervants: when we call to minde the innumerable ſtratagems againſt it, and againſt the profeſſors of it: which alone ſhall be ſufficient to ſtop all the mouthes of the adverſaries for ever, and to leave all the favourers of Idolatrie utterly without excuſe. Happy were it for us, if we had hearts ſeriouſly to thinke hereof. We ſhould finde theſe as evident an argument of Gods favour and love towards his

poore ſervants, the ſound lovers of the Goſpell of Chriſt in this nation, and ſo of his mercie towards the whole nation for their cauſes, as his admirable protection and miraculous keeping of Iudea was to that nation; when they went up generally to their publike feaſts thrice in the yeere, and none left to keepe their frontiers but women and children. This with every particular deliverance ought to give as much ſtrength to the Lords Anointed, and to all other his ſervants, whoſe hearts are truly knit unto him, as ever it did unto Iſrael; and as much to increaſe our love unto the Lord and to his pure worſhip, with our deteſtation of that bloudie religion of Rome. For if it was a ſtrong argument of his favour and love to them, and a vehement inſtigation to the bold profeſſion of his ſacred truth, then muſt it needs be ſo unto us now, and much more in ſo cleere a light of the Goſpell. Oh that theſe poore ſoules, who are inchaunted by the magicall cups of the Whore of Babylon, had but this grace, to enter into a ſerious meditation of theſe things, and to bethinke themſelves how they will anſwer the Lord, when they ſhall come to appeare before him! If everie one that receives the marke of the beaſt, the profeſſion of that beaſtly Idolatrie, and thereby ſubmiſſion to that Babyloniſh Antichriſt, openly or ſecretly, muſt be tormented day and night and never have reſt, and if all that are partakers of their ſinnes, muſt be partakers alſo of their plagues, though they had never knowne any of theſe things, only for that they have not ſought and received the love of the truth, how much more thoſe whom the Lord hath convinced ſo many wayes? What a heavie condemnation then muſt needs remaine for all, chiefly of this our nation, who have ſeene theſe wonderfull works of the Lord, and beene partakers of the ſeverall benefits; and whom he hath convinced by ſo many and ſo ſtrong meanes, the leaſt whereof ſhall be enough to make them ſpeechleſſe, and to preſſe them to hell, at the day of their appearing before Ieſus Chriſt?

And ought as much to ſtrengthen and incourage us. Alſo to procure love to his Majeſtie again, and deteſtation of that Idolatrie.

Our happineſſe if hearts to meditate of theſe things.

To thinke what it is to take the marke of the beaſt, chiefly after theſe convictions.

Apoc. 14. 9, 10, 11.

11. The relenting of moſt hearts for the preſent in many diſcoveries of their wickedneſſe.

Eleventhly, moreover how can it be thought, but that the hearts of them all have relented for the preſent in many diſcoveries of their wickedneſſe, and that they have abhorred either that whole religion, or the chiefe part thereof, I meane, that which hath fleſhed them in their bloudy attempts and execrable

practiſes,

practiſes, when they have ſeene firſt the ſavage crueltie of their parts intended againſt us all, and of the other ſide, the watchfull eye and mightie power of our God in preventing, protecting and delivering his ſervants, and in fighting againſt them from heaven; laying open their wretched malice to all creatures, and ſhewing manifeſtly againſt whom they fought. Call but your owne hearts to an account, before the Lord call you to appeare; and remember but whether the tongues of moſt of you have not acknowledged the ſame? For thoſe ſhall be in ſtead of ten thouſand witneſſes againſt you at the laſt day. And let us all bethinke our ſelves howrighteouſly our holy God may plague us by Babylon, as he did them, and what cauſe we have to feare it every houre, till our God grant us more unfainedly to repent thereof. Seeing wee have and doe ſtill increaſe ſo vehemently to doat upon it againe, after ſo manifold warnings and convictions. Even as our Saviour ſaith unto the Iewes, ſo may we juſtly ſay, If the Lord had not ſpoken unto us himſelfe, and ſhewed himſelfe by ſo many infallible evidences, as wee have mentioned, and by ſundrie others; confirming and ſealing thereby the invincible truth of his glorious Goſpell; yea, making it to ſhine ſo bright to the conſciences of all; and if withall he had not ſo ſet before our eyes that abominable Idolatrie, we had had no ſinne; no ſinne in reſpect of ours now, but now have we no colour for our ſinne. *John* 15. 22.

12 Exhortation to thinke of theſe things, and to compare our way of life with theirs, whether is more equall and more agreeable to the word of God.

Twelfthly, you therefore who will not wilfully caſt away your owne ſoules, thinke of theſe things, and yet at length begin to enter into a more ſerious meditation of that holy way of God deſcribed in his word, which we joyntly profeſſe, and many of us ſtrive unfainedly to walke in: as it is ſhortly ſhadowed out in the firſt part of this Watch; and compare it with your owne waies, deviſed and ordained meerely by men (in all things wherein you differ from us) and then judge indifferently, whether is more equall, and more like indeed to be the way of the Lord.

To reade over the French Maſſacre, and the Spaniſh Inquiſition.

If you regard none of theſe, nor any thing can move you to a further conſideration; yet reade over but the French Maſſacre, or the Inquiſition, or looke but only into the beſt part of them, eſpecially of the Inquiſition, and marke well if they be

not so full of all hellish stratagems and cruelties, as Satan himselfe could not possibly have gone beyond them, for outward bodily tortures, and also devices to torment even the soules of men, so much as may be. Wherein we may behold what all those long for, who seeke to bring in Popery againe: first, the generall butchery of France for a speedie dispatch; afterwards the Inquisition in other parts to all the remainders so long as there shall be any found to call upon the name of Christ in truth and in sinceritie.

What they long for who seeke to bring in Poperie againe.

But it may be, that you who are knowne to be favourers of that religion, are perswaded that you should doe well enough, although there should be such another shambles prepared, or another furnace set. Oh that you should ever suffer your selves to be so besotted! Have you so soone forgotten, how so lately all should have beene blowne up together, without any respect? Have you not heard nor read, how in Paris at the mercilesse Massacre, this was the generall crie againſt all who were reputed of any wealth, a Hugonote, a Hugonote. To the cruell and barbarous souldier all were made alike, after their hands were imbrued in bloud. Wherein the Lord hath plainly shewed you what you may all trust unto, especially every one who hath any thing worth the ransaking. And for the rest who thinke that they likewise should be safe, because they have no goods to lose, but that they may rather be inriched by such a day, they cannot imagine that ever Gods just vengeance will suffer them to escape, being such traitors not only to his Majestie and Gospell, but also to his anointed, and to their native Countries. Therefore they, whithersoever they flie, can looke for nothing but the revenging hand of God to pursue them, until they be destroyed; as the Lord threatned them in *Amos: That flying from the Beare, the Lion should meet with them and devoure them.*

Answer to the vaine perswasion of our professed Papists.

All the rich made Hugonotes.

What the rest may looke for who looke to be inriched by such a day.

Amos 5. 19.

For all other who seeing the danger towards the Lords annointed, and towards his Church every day approaching, by the multiplying of the enemies in every corner, and by the strange increase of their impudent and most malicious insolencie, amongst all other the crying sins of the Land, calling them in, and yet doe not to the uttermost of their power take all occasions for preventing these evils: for that it may be, they hope

Warning to all who foreseeing these evils, doe not their uttermost indevours to turne them away.

that

that themselves may escape well enough by reason of their places; let them but remember the speech of that good *Mordecay*, what he bids to answer unto *Hester* in like case, for the Lord hath caused it to be written for every one, and thus he speakes to each in effect: *Thinke not with your selves, that you shall escape more than the rest: for if you hold your peace at this time* [when God offers you opportunitie to helpe to save his Church] *comfort and deliverance shall appeare unto his people out of another place; but you, and your fathers houses shall perish. And who knoweth whether you be come unto your places for such a time?*

God speakes to each, as *Mordecay* to *Hester*. *Hester* 4. 13.

But here will arise three necessary questions to be answered, for the satisfying of every weake one, that beares a true love to Christ and his Gospell, and desireth to be saved and kept from Antichrist, and from all other delusions, and in all things to see and know the truth.

Three necessarie questions.

1. How it commeth to passe that so many have of late fallen to Popery, or Popish Atheisme, or to this extreme height of prophanenesse, and so are prepared for it; and doe daily still more and more depart, considering these so sensible discoveries of it, from the Lord himselfe.

1. How so many have and doe daily more fall to Poperie.

2. How they who stand in doubt may come to be resolved of the true religion and worship of the Lord, whether Poperie be it, or else that which we with all the reformed Churches of Christ doe joyntly professe.

2. How to be resolved of the truth.

3. How to be kept from declining to Popery, or falling from the Lord. These three are to be knowne of every one who would not take offence at the backsliding of so many, but cleave fast to the Lord, and alwaies remaine with him.

3. How to be kept from back-sliding.

For the first: Concerning the relapse in so many, we are to consider wisely of two things. First, who they are that have so fallen to Popery. Secondly, how it hath come to passe that they have so fallen.

1. They have beene ordinarily (as both experience shewes in the most, and we have good cause to judge of all the rest) such as were never throughly resolved and grounded in the truth of God; but stood staggering and doubting or wavering as children without any certaintie in any thing: for this is a marke of Christs sheep, and of those whom none can pull out of his hand, that

1. Who they have beene that have fallen, *viz.* These ordinarily. *Ephes.* 4. 14. Such as were never throughly resolved.

Iohn 10. 4, 5.

that *they know the voice of Christ* [in things necessary to salvation] they know it so certainly, as that they will follow it; they will not follow strangers, [unlesse haply left for a time, or in some lesse things to humble them by their ignorance] No not though an Angell from heaven should come and preach otherwise, yet they would hold him accursed.

Galath. 1. 8.

2. Or never made conscience to practise that which they knew.

Matth. 7. 26, 27.

Or secondly, such as if ever they seemed to have had any resolution, yet never made conscience to practise truly and unfainedly, that which they have knowne, and so were never indeed grounded upon the true rocke, neither were any thing but meere hypocrites, when they were at the best. Being either such as lived in some grosse sinnes against the light of their owne hearts, or in the omitting of some knowne holy and necessary duties: or else performed only an outward service without the service of the heart: for these never had the promises to be preserved from falling away.

John 4. 23.
Philip. 3. 3.

3. Or never received the love of it, so as to part with all for it.

2 *Thess.* 2. 10.
Mat. 13. 44, 46.

Or else such as never received the love of the truth so farre, as that they would lose or forgoe all for it; but only received it for a fashion, so long as it might stand with their credit, pleasure or commoditie; never esteeming it as the treasure hid in the field; for which they would have beene content to have sold all, and so were never truly partakers of it.

4. Or having a meere temporary faith.

Or fourthly, they have beene such, as only had that temporarie faith which our Saviour speakes of, that is, only certaine good fits, and motions, or good purposes, but without any constancie or perseverance in practising the truth, and the good waies of God.

5. Or having all their religion for the love of themselves meerely.

Or such as in whom all the religion that ever they have had, hath beene only wrought in them, by a feare of hell and of Gods terrible vengeance, or upon some respect meerely concerning themselves, but not of any true love of God, because of his goodnesse in himselfe, or his mercie and love towards them in Christ. So that they served him as slaves only for feare, or meerely for the love of themselves, thus wholly respecting themselves, and not the Lord therein so as they should.

6. Or such as God will recall.

Or finally, such as God will in his due time awaken and recall by one meanes or other, it may be by some strange affliction.

For

For if there be any of them that have truly made conscience of the waies of the Lord, as they ought upon their certain knowledge, and thereby shewed themselves to be indeed Gods elect, they will then be found either to have left off to live under the holy meanes ordained of God, for the growth and perseverance of his people, that is, under the faithfull preaching ministerie; or else to have left off their care and endevour to grow in grace by that and by the other meanes God vouchsafed them; or have thrust themselves into temptation, and so have thereby, or the like, in Gods displeasure fallen only for a season: but such undoubtedly will the Lord recall in his due time, and pull them out of the jawes of Sathan againe, because it is unpossible that any of his should perish.

But to come to the reasons why such have so fallen; The generall reason is, the righteous judgement of God upon them all, on some of them to endlesse perdition; as upon those who are gone out from us, but were not of us: upon the rest to declare his severitie towards his owne children, withdrawing themselves but a little from his obedience.

Reasons why such fall to Popery.
1. Gods righteous judgement for contempt of the Gospell.
1. On them who were never resolved of the truth, or never made conscience of it.
But were despisers of it.
2 Thess. 2. 10.

And first for those who were never fully resolved of the truth, nor zealous for it; or yet never made conscience of that little which they knew. They were all of them meere despisers and abusers of the word of the Lord; and therefore did God most righteously send this vengeance upon them. For this is that terrible judgement that the Lord hath forewarned, that shall follow the contempt of the Gospell in the daies of Antichrist: That therefore God shall send them strong delusions, that they may beleeve lies, (such palpable errors, as sometimes they abhorred) like as we heard before. And all this, because they received not the love of the truth to their salvation. So that the Lord accounts all such to be contemners of his truth, who never received the love of it so farre, as to seeke to know it certainly, and to grow up to have a full resolution of it, and to ripenesse of knowledge in it, and in every part of it, or to yeeld a cheerefull obedience thereunto. And indeed how can they ever be thought to have received the love of the truth, that never accounted it worthy the labour of searching into it, by all good meanes of reading, hearing, conference, prayer, practise, that they might

Vers 12. *All are contemners of the truth, who never so received the love of it, as by all holy meanes to search the knowledge of it.* 2 Thess. 2. 8.

be

be eſtabliſhed in the ſame? How can theſe men be judged ever to have eſteemed it as the treaſure hid in the field? For then they would have digged for it as for ſilver, and have ſearched for it as for treaſure: they would have accounted it above thouſands of gold and ſilver: and have beene content to have ſold all in the earth, to have bought that field where the treaſure was, thereby to have made ſure of the treaſure.

Prov. 3. 4.

Pſal. 119.

2. All who never made conſcience to practiſe that which they knew,

Secondly, for them who have had knowledge, and yet had never hearts to put their knowledge ſoundly and conſcionably in practiſe, how can they be deemed ever to have received the love of the truth that they might be ſaved? would not the ſincere love of it, have cauſed them to have parted with their deareſt ſinnes? Would they not then have yeelded up themſelves wholly unto the Lord, to be ruled only by him and by his heavenly word; and have ſought by all holy converſation to have honoured him, and by all holy meanes to have graced the profeſſion of his ſacred Goſpell; to ſhew themſelves thankfull for that rich grace, and to expreſſe the heavenly comfort which they have found therein? This then muſt needs be acknowledged the righteous vengeance of the Lord upon them, for the contempt of that glorious and ſhining light of the Goſpell of Ieſus Chriſt, to give them up to be the marked ſervants of Antichriſt, to beleeve his moſt groſſe deluſions, and ſo to goe on from ſtep to ſtep, untill they come to perdition. Thus we know the Lord declared his righteous vengeance upon the very Heathen, for abuſing and contemning the light of Nature, becauſe when they knew God, they did not glorifie him as God, neither were thankfull, therefore the Lord gave them up to be ſuch fooles, to be ſo beſotted and filled with all beaſtly abominations.

Rom. 1. 21, 22.

Alſo for the diſcovery of hypocrites.

The Lord doth hereby moreover moſt notably diſcover hypocrites before the world. This is nothing elſe but the unmaſking of them now, that their iniquitie may goe before them into judgement, and that they may be evident to all men what they were, when they were at the beſt. That they were ſuch as have beene deſcribed, either never rooted and grounded in the truth, much leſſe rightly ſetled and built upon the true foundation; or elſe ſuch as had but a ſeeming and temporarie faith (as was ſaid)

and

and therefore in time of temptation fell away. Such as were in account and shew amongst Christs sheepe, but were never of them; for that then they had not departed from them; they would not then have followed strangers: none could haue plucked them out of the hands of Iesus Christ.

This is therefore to discover such on the one side; and on the other to manifest to the world, who they are that are his sheepe indeed: who have soundly received the love of the truth to their immortalitie. For they having the true seale of God, and earnest of his Spirit, doe in the patience of Saints labour still to keepe the Commandements of God, and the Faith of Iesus, and to keepe their garments unspotted in the worst times and greatest declinings. And finally, these strive then to be the best and to shine the brightest, when the world is at the worst.

As for those who were ever soundly grounded in the truth, and did truly make conscience, and yet are now fallen to Poperie, (if any such can be found) let them looke upon the causes of back-sliding, but even as they are set downe in the first part of this Watch, Edition 9. page 156. 157. &c. and there they shall undoubtedly finde the reason of it in some of those causes. More specially let them weigh well, whether God have not hereby met with the pride of their hearts, for being conceited of their knowledge; or for imagining that their case was good enough, and therefore leaving off to strive to perfection, by using constantly all the meanes of nourishing and preserving grace alive in them, as of conscionable hearing, reading, conference, meditation, prayer, watching, &c. For even for lacke of striving to perfection, and of daily growing, the Lord threatneth this apostasie, and sheweth it to be impossible otherwise to escape, if we strive not to be led forward to perfection. For this sinne argueth evidently either the pride of our hearts, or a base estimation of his graces, neither of which sinnes he can endure. Or let it be considered, whether they have not withdrawne themselves from living under the faithfull Ministery, the true and painfull Preachers, by whom our Saviour governeth and preserveth his from all delusions and departing: and whether they have not thus withdrawne themselves from under his protection. Finally, whether they have not throwne themselves into

And to make Gods owne servants knowne.

Apoc. 14. 12.

The reason of the fall of some of Gods owne deare servants.

Looke the causes of back-sliding.

1.
Some pride or conceitednesse, and so leaving off to strive to perfection.

Hebr. 6. 1. 4.

2.
Or withdrawing themselves from under the faithfull Ministery, or any way leaving it.

3.
Or by familiarity with Gods enemies.

into the paw of Sathan, by falling to be familiar with the enemies of God, and by leaving off the hatred of their sinnes. Or for being so bold as to confer with the Serpent, without a warrantable calling; or without that assistance, which God hath ordained, and offereth to all who will seeke for it; to wit, the advice of the godly learned, and specially their faithfull Pastors. Or at least whether God have not left them up for some other sinne, which by this meanes he will reveale and correct.

4. Or being too bold to confer with the Serpent.

5. Or for some other grievous sinne, which he will thus correct and reveale.

Now as it cannot be doubted, but that the Lord may give up his owne faithfull servants for a time to be deluded by Antichrist, and to goe many steps in Popery towards perdition, for these or the like sinnes, (though such be wonderfull seldome to be found) yet this is a certaine truth, that for all such as were ever his, hee will fetch them againe at least by great hand, by some strong affliction of bodie, or soule, or both. For his gifts and calling are without repentance. Antichrist nor Satan himselfe, nor all the power of hell, shall ever be able to pull any one of Christs sheepe out of his hand. He hath said it, who is faithfull and true, the great Shepherd who hath so dearely bought them with his owne bloud. None can plucke them out of my hand. My Father who gave them me, is greater than all, none can pull them out of my Fathers hand. He will seeke them out, and bring them home againe to his fold. And so much for the first Question, how so many have and doe daily fall to Popery, notwithstanding all the Lords most sensible discovering the vilenesse of it.

But he will fetch them againe at least by strong hand *Rom.* 11. 29. *Iohn* 10. *Esay* 54. 8, 9, 10. *Iohn* 10. 28, 29.

The second Question.

For the second Question, *viz. How those who stand in doubt may be resolved, which is the true religion of the Lord.*

Quest. 2. How to come to be resolved of the truth.

1. They that desire to be resolved which is the truth, must come to our Saviour, who is Truth it selfe. He alone hath the eye-salve, and openeth the blinde eyes, being appointed of his Father hereunto. This must all grant of necessitie, That he being salvation must needs most surely teach the way thereof.

1. By comming to our Saviour who is Truth. *Iohn* 14. 6. *Apoc.* 3. 18. *Luke* 4. 18.

2. The manner of our comming to him, must be in all humilitie, humbled for all our sinnes, but chiefly the most grievous and hainous of them, and especially mourning for this fearefull contempt of our Lord and Saviour, and his glorious Gospell;

2. Comming in humilitie. For such only have the promises.

Goſpell; that we have ſo little regarded to know him and the way of life by him; ſo lamenting our blindneſſe and ſecuritie, and deſiring to have him to open our eyes, as the blinde men doe in the Goſpell, for all the promiſes are made to the humble. That he will teach the humble, and that his ſecret is with the humble. That he will guide them in judgement. He will teach ſinners his way. [Meaning ſuch poore humbled ſinners, to whom all the promiſes of the Goſpell are made.]

Matth.20.30, & 34. Jam.4.6.

Matth.5.3,4,6. Pſal.25.8,9. Luk.4.18.

3. We muſt come to him thus ſeeking the truth, with this purpoſe alone, that we may honour him in the ſound profeſſion of the ſame truth; in knowing and obeying him only according to his will. For thoſe that truly love Ieſus Chriſt, and ſeeke to honour him by the knowledge of his truth, he will honour them, by making himſelfe knowne unto them. And if any man will doe his will, he ſhall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God. Then we ſhall know his voice and beleeve it, when we have unfainedly repented of all our ſinnes, and have reſolved, that as the ſheepe of the true Paſtor, we will follow him only, and doe whatſoever he commandeth us, and that forthwith without lingring, forſaking all things which may hinder us. But if we come to ſearch in the pride of our hearts, or in a reſolution to live ſtill in our evill way, or without true repentance of every knowne ſinne, or for any other end, but only to obey and honour the Lord Ieſus, let us never looke to have him to anſwer us by his Spirit, but rather to be given up ſtill unto Satan to blinde us, and to anſwer us according to our evill hearts, as we heard before.

3. With purpoſe only to honour the Lord in obeying his truth. *1 Sam.2.30. John 3.44,30. Iohn 14.21. Iohn 7.17,18. Iohn 10.4,5.*

Ezek.14.4. 1 King.22.19, 20, & 24.

4. We muſt come unto our Saviour, in thoſe meanes which he himſelfe hath appointed. That is, 1. In inſtant prayer that he would vouchſafe us that mercie to know his truth to our ſalvation and to his glorie. As *Cornelius*, who to be reſolved of the truth, kept a Faſt and prayed. 2. We muſt come to heare him by the Miniſterie of his ſervants, who preach his Goſpell moſt ſincerely: for we are commanded to heare, and then are we promiſed that our ſoules ſhall live. The Lord hath ordained thus to ſpeake unto us eſpecially by his Miniſters, whom he hath appointed for the gathering of his elect, and the accompliſhment of his kingdome; by them to open our blinde eyes.

4. We muſt ſeeke him in the meanes that himſelfe hath appointed, as *Matt.7.7. Iam.1.5.*

1. In prayer. *Cant.1.6. Acts 10.31.*

2. In the miniſtery of thoſe who preach the Goſpell moſt ſincerely and painfully. *Eſay 55.3. Eph.4.11,12,14.*

And amongst them by those chiefly, who labour most faithfully, and walke most uprightly according to their doctrine: for these declare themselves sent of him, and with these hee hath promised his presence unto the end of the world, to be powerfull by them especially. Hence *Cornelius* is bidden to send for *Peter*, and *Peter* must speake unto him to resolve him. By his preaching will God save him and his house, not by the ministerie of the Angell. 3. By searching the Scriptures, in which we must have eternall life; and through ignorance whereof we erre; so trying all doctrines by them as did the Bereans. 4. By conferring with the godly learned, chiefly the faithfull and learned Ministers, (whose lips the Lord hath sanctified to preserve knowledge, and appointed that his people should seeke his word of them, as of the Priests under the Law) by shewing them our doubts, and wishing their helpes and resolutions. 5. Reading (in all humilitie in a feeling of our owne ignorance, and with a desire to know and to yeeld unto the truth) the bookes and answers of those, who have fully answered and discovered the sleights and subtilties of Sathan and Antichrist, and most holily set downe and maintained the truth and testimonie of Iesus Christ. Finally, which is the summe of all; if we aime at this in all our search only to honour the Lord by our knowledge and to doe his will, and withall shall conscionably put in practise that which we know, and finally desire to grow therein, the Lord will reveale the rest unto us. For,

Matth. 28.20.

Acts 10.22. 32. 37.

3. Searching the Scriptures. *Iohn* 5.39. 2 *Tim.* 3.16. *Acts* 17.11.

4. Conferring with the godly learned. *Malac.* 2.7.

5. Reading the Defences, and Answers written by the learned servants of God, as namely those mentioned after in the end of this Chapter. *Iohn* 7.17,18. *Philip.* 3.15. *Psal.* 25.8,9. *Iohn* 10.4,5. *John* 6.45.

1 *Iohn* 2.3.5 20.

Esay 30.18.21.

These alone are the humble ones. These are they that are Christs sheepe, who will follow him. They shall know his voice. They are taught of God. The anointing, that is, the Spirit which they receive, teaching all them who make conscience to keepe all his Commandements. They therefore have the promise to heare a voice behinde them, directing and telling them, This is the way, walke in it, when they turne to the right hand or to the left. Thus it shall be with all them who wait on him in the way of righteousnesse. And so much also for this second point, how we may be resolved of the truth.

The third Question.

Thirdly, for the last question, *How to be kept from declining*

to

to Popery, and from falling from the Lord to any extremitie.

1. We are ever to keepe in minde thoſe teſtimonies which the Lord hath given to his Goſpell, and againſt Popery in the diſcovery thereof, I meane thoſe in the reaſons ſet downe before and the like. 2. To obſerve the meanes of finding out, and certaine knowing the truth. 3. To beware of all the cauſes of back-ſliding, ſome whereof are ſet downe in the firſt part of this Watch, and eſpecially of neglecting the meanes of grace there mentioned. 4. To looke carefully to the meanes how to keepe alway a tender conſcience, there likewiſe ſpecified. Finally, which is the very ſumme of all, to ſtrive to live under a faithfull miniſterie, whereby we may heare the voice of Chriſt, as it were, continually ſounding in our eares, to learne of our Saviour to watch and pray, and to looke to our daily growth in grace. Thus we abiding with our Saviour in obedience, he will alſo abide in us by his Spirit, we ſhall never be in danger to be deluded. We may be ſafe under his protection; none ſhall ever plucke us out of his hand. And thus much likewiſe for this point, how to be kept from declining from the Lord.

Iohn 15. 4.
Iohn 10. 27, 28.

For thoſe with whom all this cannot prevaile, to cauſe them to be afraid of Popery, let me intreat of them, even as in the preſence of Ieſus Chriſt, before whom we muſt all undoubtedly appeare to anſwer for it:

1. To thinke of theſe reaſons before mentioned more ſeriouſly, and that in their holieſt meditations, and to pray earneſtly that God may give them a true underſtanding rightly to diſcerne thereof.

2. To ponder and trie throughly this one reaſon, touched before, fetched directly from the very reaſon of our Saviour, *Iohn* 8. 44. [viz. *Ye are of your father the Devill, and the luſts of your father will yee doe, he hath beene a murtherer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth*] which I will frame in the plaineſt manner that I can, for the eaſier underſtanding and triall of it, that all may be better able to diſcerne of the truth of it.

That religion which teacheth lying and murder, for the ſupporting and advancing of it, is of the Devill.

But the religion of the Ieſuited Papiſt is a religion which teacheth

teacheth lying and murder, for the ſupporting and advancing of it.

Ergo, The religion of the Ieſuited Papiſt is of the Devill.

Firſt, the propoſition is ſtrong, and cannot be gainesaid.

For if Liers and Murderers are of the Devill, then that religion which teacheth lying and murdering to ſupport and advance it ſelfe, is ſo likewiſe.

But the firſt is true, as our Saviour affirmes directly againſt the malicious Iewes, That they were of the Devill, becauſe they were Liers and Murderers.

Ergo, That religion which teacheth lying and murdering, to ſupport and advance it ſelfe, is ſo likewiſe, namely of the Devill.

Secondly, for the Aſſumption, concerning which ſome of the chiefe of them have profeſſed, that if it could be proved, [*viz.*] that Poperie teacheth lying and murdering, for the ſupporting and advancing of it ſelfe, they would utterly renounce it, and imbrace the Goſpell: I prove it thus:

Firſt, God himſelfe hath manifeſted it to all the world, to be ſuch a religion; and that by all the diſcoveries of their murders, chiefly of Kings and Princes, and of their bloudie maſſacres of ſo many Chriſtians, with their lyings and equivocations. And above all, that Powder-treaſon, matchleſſe for all bloudie and devilliſh crueltie, all donè by the directions of their teachers to the ſame ends.

Secondly, by all their bookes written in defence of theſe and the like, grounded upon their owne *Maximes*, as, *fides cum hereticis non eſt ſervanda.*

That all Proteſtants are Heretiques and excommunicate, and that therefore their hand muſt be againſt them to ſhed their bloud, viz. when their opportunitie ſerves thereto, and the like.

Doctor Morton in his booke called An exact diſcoverie of Romiſh doctrine in the caſe of conſpiracie and rebellion,

For further declaration and manifeſtation hereof, and for a full diſcoverie of their ſhifts and gloſſes, to hide their bloudie practiſes, ſee Doctor *Morton* Biſhop of Coventrie and Lichfield his manifeſtation of it to be their plaine and direct doctrine; ſetting downe the places out of ſundrie their chiefe authors, upon the occaſion of the Powder-treaſon, together with his Encounter againſt *Parſons* in defence thereof.

So

So likewiſe ſee *Revelatio conſiliorum, quæ initio Synodi Tridentinæ erant inita & in hunc uſque diem continuata, viz.* The revealing of Popiſh conſpiracies, betweene the Pope, the Emperour, and other Popiſh Princes and States at that Councell, againſt all Kings and Princes, and States of the Chriſtian world, from the beginning of the Councell of Trent unto this day; for the utter rooting out of the Goſpell of Chriſt, and deſtroying all the Profeſſors thereof, either by fraud under pretence of peace, or other leagues, or by open hoſtilitie and crueltie, whenſoever their time and opportunitie ſerves, with ſundrie of the Popes Bulls, and other diſcoveries annexed thereto, to the ſame purpoſe. So,

written by direction from our ſuperiours, printed Anno 1620. Theſe bookes are worthy the diligent reading of all that would ſee the danger we ſtand in continually of Popiſh plots, and what fidelitie is to be looked for from them.

Watſons Quodlibets.

Bells Anatomie of Popiſh tyrannie.

For thoſe that would be kept from Popery, which is the ſcourge that uſually followes the contempt of the Goſpell, *viz.* That becauſe men receive not the love of the truth, therefore hee ſends upon them ſtrong deluſions, that they may beleeve lies and be damned: And ſo for all thoſe who would walke with God all their daies, God hath provided theſe helpes and preſervatives.

2 *Theſſ.* 2. 10, 11, 12.

I.

For notable confutations of Poperie.

1. *The Kings Majeſties Booke againſt* Bellarmine, *with the Defence thereof by my Lord of* Winton.
2. *Biſhop* Iewel *againſt* Harding.
3. *B.* Bilſon *againſt Cardinall* Allin.
4. *Doctor* Fulkes *Workes, eſpecially the Confutation of the corruptions in the Rhemiſe Teſtament.*
5. *Doctor* Abbot, *now Arch-biſhop of Canterbury, againſt* Hill.
6. *Doctor* Raynolds, *more eſpecially againſt* Hart, *and againſt Idolatrie, and his* Theſes de Eccleſia.
7. *Doctor* Whitakers *his Workes.*
8. *Doctor* Sutcliffe.
9. *Maſter* Perkins *his Reformed Catholike, defended by Doctor* Abbot, *Biſhop of Salisbury againſt the cavils of* Biſhop.
10. *Maſter* Whites *Bookes, with the Defence thereof by his brother Doctor* White.

11. Philip Mornay *againſt the Maſſe.*
12. *Doctor* Willets *Synopſis.*
13. *Doctor* Fields *booke of the Church.*
14. *The Popes deadly Wound.*
15. *More worke for a Maſſe-Prieſt.*
16. *The reformed Spanyard.*

With ſundry other who have deſerved worthily of the Church of God in this behalfe.

2.

Diſcoveries of the bloudie crueltie and vileneſſe of Poperie, and Popiſh practiſes, with the manner of the beginning, increaſe, and the univerſall overſpreading of it, and contrarily the perpetuall witneſſes of the truth, which we profeſſe.

1. *Booke of Martyrs by Maſter* Fox.
2. *Biſhop* Mortons *Diſcoverie, with the diſcoveries before mentioned.*
3. *The hiſtorie of the Councell of Trent in Engliſh.*
4. *Doctor* Sutcliffe *againſt* Parſons.
5. *Maſter* Taylours *Sermons upon the Powder-treaſon.*
6. *Their* Index Expurgatorius *mentioned before with the reſt of it.*
7. Taxa cameræ Apoſtolicæ.
8. Fiſcus Papalis.
9. *Doctor* Vſhers *booke* de Eccleſia.
10. *Doctor* Willets Tetraſtylon.
11. *French diſcoverie of Popiſh religion, comparing Poperie with Turciſme, and Iudaiſme, &c. The French Maſſacre. Popiſh Inquiſition.*
12. *Doctor* Vſhers *Sermon before the Commons houſe of Parliament.*

3.

Speciall helpes for ſanctification, whereby to be kept from declining from God, and ſo from this ſcourge.

1. *The holy Scriptures, to read ſome part thereof daily.*
2. *Maſter* Greenhams *works.*
3. *Maſter* Perkins *works.*

4. *Doctor*

4. *Doctor* Halls *works.*
5. *Maſter* Dod *upon the Commandements.*
6. *Maſter* Rogers *practiſe of Chriſtianitie, with the abridgement thereof.*
7. *Maſter* Downhams *Warfare.*
8. *The True Watch.*
9. *Maſter* Dike *of the Deceitfulneſſe of mans heart, with his treatiſe of Repentance.*
10. *Maſter* Crookes *way to true bleſſedneſſe.*
11. *Maſter* Banes.
12. *Doctor* Baylie *his Practiſe of pietie, with ſuch as have written of the ſanctification of the Sabbath, and many other who have written of ſome ſpeciall parts of holineſſe, as*
13. *Maſter* Bifields *ſix Treatiſes.*
14. Taffin *of the marks of Gods children, &c.*

4.

Helpes for prayer, becauſe wee cannot be kept except wee pray, nor ever ſtand in theſe evill dayes, without the ſpeciall ſuſtaining hand of our God.

Maſter Bradfords *Prayers.*
Maſter Dearings.
Thoſe ſet forth by Maſter Field.
Maſter Herons *Helpe to devotion.*
The ſecond part of the true Watch, viz. the rule of prayer.
With ſundrie others, as everie one is acquainted with them, whom he findes the beſt.

5.

Helpes for faſting to humble us, and make our prayers more powerfull, and effectuall that we may be kept.

Maſter Wilkinſons *Treatiſe thereof.*
The holy exerciſe of a true Faſt.
The order and doctrine of a generall Faſt.
Maſter Bound.
Doctor Downham.

Hitherto of their fearefull declining to Idolatrie before the Captivitie; and what cauſes we have for that, and for our danger hourely encreaſing thereby, to watch and pray continually.

Abomination 33.

The Atheiſme of Iudah, angring the Lord to the uttermoſt, and bringing the Captivitie.

Atheiſme the higheſt ſtep of impietie, whereunto many of them came. *Eſay* 5. 19.

TO come to the laſt and higheſt ſtep of their apoſtaſie and impietie. The holy Ghoſt declares that many of them became Atheiſts, to ſcoffe at the Lord and his word; yea, at all the threatnings which the Prophets denounced againſt their ſins. Firſt, the Prophet *Eſay* he ſhewes that even in his time, all amongſt them that were extremely prophane, did grow unto this: for he himſelfe having in the name of the Lord denounced a moſt terrible woe againſt all them that *drew iniquitie with cords of vanitie, and ſinne as with cart-roapes*; meaning thoſe that were ſo deſperatly given up, as that they ſtudied which way to be moſt outragious in all impietie, to glut themſelves in the luſts of their owne hearts; he after declareth, that theſe and the like were their ſpeeches: *Let him make ſpeed; let him haſten his worke, that we may ſee it. Let the counſell of the holy one of Iſrael draw neere, that we may know it.* Thus they jeſted againſt the true Prophets of the Lord, when they denounced that God would make them captives and ſlaves unto their enemies, according as he had threatned in his Law. Then they began to ſay, That they would faine ſee that day. That day was the only day for all them who had runne thorow all by drinking, rioting, exceſſe, and all voluptuous living, which are ſpoken of in that Chapter, in the verſes immediatly before. And thus they ſcoffed at all other the threatnings of the Lord, wherein manifeſtly denying the truth and juſtice of the Lord, what did they but deny the Lord himſelfe, as the fooles that ſay in their hearts, there is no God; being become ſo corrupt and abominable, as the Lord witneſſeth in the fourteenth *Pſalme*. Yea many of them (as is moſt like) did deſire to ſee ſuch a day; thinking that if ever it came, it would be

As thoſe who were moſt deſperate in ſinning, haling ſin as with cart-roapes, Denied his threatnings and truth. Their ſpeeches.

The day of vengeance wiſhed by deſperate ſcoffing Atheiſts. *Eſay* 5. 11, 12.

Pſal. 14. 1.

be the only time for them, being deſperate in their eſtate and every way elſe. Thus they ſcoffed likewiſe at the Prophet *Ieremie*, and at the reſt of the Lords holy meſſengers. Nay, ſome of the notorious impudent ſcorners amongſt them, would not be afraid to ſay to *Ieremie* to his face, *Where is the word of the Lord? let it come now.* Becauſe it came not on them, as he and other of the former Prophets had denounced, they thought it would never come, howſoever they lived. Thus they were in all things as thoſe before the Captivitie of Iſrael, to whom the Prophet *Amos* pronounceth that terrible woe for the ſame: *Woe unto you*, ſaith *Amos, that deſire the day of the Lord! And what have you to doe with the day of the Lord? The day of the Lord is darkneſſe, and not light. As if a man did flie from a Lion, and a Beare met him, or went into the houſe and leaned upon the wall, and a Serpent bit him.* The meaning of the Prophet is plaine, That they ſhould be ſo farre off from getting any good by that day, that they ſhould finde nothing in it but horror and miſery, weeping and wringing of hands. In ſtead of eſcaping beggery, or inriching themſelves by the ſpoile, which they might imagine, they ſhould finde the ſword, peſtilence, famine, crying, horror, trembling of conſcience; yea, the vengeance of God purſuing them untill they were conſumed.

Ierem. 17.15.

Amos 5. 8. What a day that will be when it commeth. *Verſ.* 19. *Looke and tremble you ſcorners.*

Sometimes to declare their hearts the more, they uſed to make jeſts upon the threatnings of the Prophets, and upon their calling them to repentance, unto faſting and weeping: and by them tooke occaſion to be ſo much more deſperatly blaſphemous: for thus they would ſay, ſcoffing at the Prophets and their threatnings: *Let us eat and drinke, for to morrow we ſhall die.* Let us be merry and take our pleaſure whilſt wee may, for the Prophets tell us, To morrow we muſt die; they ſtill crie our time is hying on. For this the Lord tels them, that this blaſphemous ſinne was in his eares; he could not endure it. And that of all other their iniquities, this could not be purged untill they died (as they uſed to ſcoffe) untill that vengeance was executed. Like as it was with all them who were ſo extremely given up to all exceſſe of vanitie, that they were ſuch Atheiſts; ſo was it alſo with all who had reſolved to live in their ſinnes, and regarded not the admonitions of the Prophets. The chiefe men as well as the

Scoffing at the threatnings of the Prophets. *Eſay* 22. 12, 13, 14.

Verſ. 13.

This ſin cannot be purged till they die.

The chiefe were like to the reſt herein.

All were at a covenant with death and hell. *Eſay* 28. 15.

the reſt; all were alike. Thus they all ſpake in their hearts and practiſes, *We haue made a covenant with death, and with hell we are at an agreement, though a ſcourge runne over and paſſe thorow, it ſhall not come at us: for we haue made falſhood our refuge, and under vanitie are wee hid.* Thus was it their manner to gibe at the denunciations of the Prophets, who told them that thoſe things wherein they truſted were vaine, and would deceive them. Every one ſecured himſelfe, that he ſhould doe as well as others, whatſoever came to paſſe. They were at their covenant with death and hell, that neither of theſe ſhould touch them. As for God, they knew none whoſe vengeance they ſhould regard. Well, the Lord tels them, *that he would ſend a haile ſtorme upon them* [a plague as thicke and terrible as the haile of Ægypt mingled with fire] *and this ſhould ſweepe away all their vaine confidence.* And when this vengeance ſhould paſſe over, that it ſhould light upon them, and beat them downe, that they ſhould be trodden under foot.

Verſ. 17. The Lord threats a haile ſtorme to beat downe their confidence.

Verſ. 19.

Atheiſts of all other moſt timorous when the vengeance comes

And whereas now, they of all other were ſo void of feare; they then above all ſhould haue nothing but feare. They who had ſeemed moſt deſperate, ſhould be then moſt cowardly and ſhivering: to make them to underſtand and know the Lord, by feeling that his moſt dreadfull and ſtrange worke, which by hearing it, they could not be brought to learne. Therefore of all ſinnes he bids them to leave off this of ſcorning at the Lords threatnings, for that this ſhould increaſe their bonds.

Verſ. 22.

Of this and the application of it, ſee more in the cauſes why God would not ſpare them. *Eſay* 28. 15. *Ezek.* 9. 9.

But of this ſinne we ſhall have more cauſe to ſpeake, when we ſhall come to ſee why the Lord would not ſpare them at the intreatie of the Prophet. Of which one chiefe cauſe was, for that they ſaid, the Lord ſaw them not, therefore he would ſurely doe as he had threatned, that they might know that he ſaw them and all their iniquitie. Thus wee ſee to what a height of outrage they were growne herein, and withall the righteous vengeance of the Lord in the ſame. For the application of it, I will deferre it to that place in the ninth verſe, where they ſaid, The Lord ſaw them not; and withall the further declaration of our imminent perill for this ſinne; together with the dreadfull eſtate of all wretched Atheiſts, and how every creature ſhall one day condemne them. And finally, how of all ſinnes every one of

of us had need to uſe all holy meanes to root out this bitter root from amongſt us, every one in his place, and in thoſe committed unto his charge, which muſt needs otherwiſe root out all ſuch, and bring the Lords vengeance upon this Nation; becauſe theſe challenge the Lord, if he be a God to declare himſelfe, and doe continually dare him to the face. Now our gratious God enlighten our blinde eyes, and ſoften our hard hearts, to have ſome ſenſe hereof, to ſeeke to prevent or mitigate the evils; and prepare us to a further and more ſerious conſideration hereof.

Abomination 34.

Diviſions of Iudah, angring the Lord, bringing the Captivitie.

FRom this fearfull apoſtaſie wherein they fell from the Covenant of the Lord into ſo many moſt horrible ſins, and from their continuing proudly and obſtinately in them againſt the Lord, and all that warned them in his name, proceeded ſpecially the diviſions of Iudah, and the ruine of all: for many of them falling unto this damnable Atheiſme; others unto Idolatrie; all generally unto ſuch prophaneneſſe and carnall contempt of all true pietie and devotion, ſome oppreſſing and ſpoiling, others being oppreſſed and ſpoiled, all gone from the Lord, except only his poore remnant which ſtucke unto the true Prophets, and mourned for theſe abominations, how could it be but that there muſt needs follow amongſt them extreme and endleſſe diviſions, almoſt every one againſt another? How could it be imagined to be otherwiſe, when every one was given to covetouſneſſe, each for his owne way, and for his owne advantage? *When truth was gone, and every one bent their tongues as their bowes for lies*, as the Prophet *Ieremie* ſpeaketh: *When each ſpread nets by their deceitfull devices, to catch their brethren: When as the beſt was as a brier, ſo as no man could truſt a friend, none could truſt a brother, nor her that ſlept in his owne boſome.* When every one would deceive his friend, and taught their tongues to ſpeake lies: ſo as their tongues were as an arrow ſhot out; that though

Diviſions flowing from all the former abominations, and chiefly from the apoſtaſie in ſo many.

All given to covetouſneſſe.

Ierem. 9. 3, 4. Micah 7. 2. And ſpreading nets.

Micah 7. 5. As no man could truſt one another.

though *they spake peaceably to their neighbours, yet in heart they laid wait for them.* When moreover *the greater spoiled the poorer, the poorer cried out for the violence*, so farre as they durst, *but had none to helpe*; what could there be in this case, but discontentments, grudges, and heart-burnings each against others? Finally, when the prophane bended themselves in all despightfull manner, against all seeming religious; the Idolaters against the Atheist condemning him, the Atheist scoffing at the Idolater, and at all the rest that made any conscience. But especially how grievous must the enmity needs be, when all were against poore *Ieremie*, *Esay*, *Micah*, and all those who beleeved the word of the Lord, and feared his judgements? For against them must all kinde of obstinate sinners needs set themselves, and hate them to the death. Because these alone cleaving fast unto the Lord, convinced and condemned the sinnes and apostasie of all the rest, who had departed from the Lord: every one of them after a sort proclaiming the anger of God to come upon all the ungodly, at least by their lives and conversations; for they shewing themselves carefull to avoid all those sinnes wherein the rest wallowed; and waining themselves as much as they could, from the delights and familiar conversations with the wicked, though not from the publike exercises of religion, nor from communion with them in that outward profession of the truth, which yet was amongst them, how could it be, but that they must needs hereby have their trials encreased, and just cause to sit oft times all alone, not knowing whither to goe to finde any, in whom they might have true comfort? Hence it was, that these and these only were made as signes and wonders, as wee heard, that they alone were such as could not be endured. All other sorts of people might well be borne, Idolaters, Drunkards, Atheists, and those who drew on Gods vengeance as with cart-ropes. All might be suffered but only the godly. Hereupon every one cursed them as the Vipers of the Land. All generally hated them, not thinking that any evill could be sufficient for them. Almost *each one waited for their halting, to have some matter against them, even their owne friends and familiars, as was evident in Ieremy.* Thus was that truly verified; *Ephraim against Manasseh, Manasseh against Ephraim, and all against Iudah.* Not a man

Ierem. 9.5, 8. The greater spoiling the poorer.

Irreligious against all seeming religious

All against the true Prophets, and all that feared the Lord.

Because these condemned the rest, at least by their lives.

Ierem. 15.17. *Ierem.* 26.8, 11. And so were made signes and wonders to the rest. *Esay* 8.18. *Amos* 7.10.

Ierem. 15.10.

Jerem. 20.10. Their owne familiars waiting to have matter against them. *Esay* 9.21.

man at length was left with poore *Ieremie* and *Baruch*; not one of any note, that durſt be ſeene to ſpeake a word for them, no not to get *Ieremie* out of the dungeon, that he ſhould not there miſerably ſtarve to the death; but only *Ebedmelech* a ſtranger. Though the hearts of the Rulers generally, and of the reſt, did relent when they heard them, ſo that they gave teſtimonie to their innocencie, and but a little before their deſtruction, would ſpeake for them as they did for *Ieremie*, yet thus were they overcaried by the violence of the Prieſts, that at length none durſt be ſeene to ſpeake one word for them.

Ierem. 25. *Ierem.* 20. *Ier.* 36. 2. 19, 26. *Ierem.* 38. 4, 8. *Ierem.* 26. 16, 17, 18, 19. *Ierem.* 36. 19. Not one left with Gods faithfull ſervants to be ſeene to ſtand for them.

Even as it was at the death of our Saviour, ſo was it here. This might ſeeme a picture and a fore-runner of that. He that ſhall but reade the fift of *Eſay*, with the ſecond, third, and ſeventh of *Micah*, may ſee the diviſions, and the chiefe ſinnes which were the grounds thereof. And ever the more the ſinnes increaſed, as they did ſtill unto the end, the more likewiſe did the diviſions, and eſpecially the rage againſt all who truly feared the Lord. So that hereby of all the multitudes ſeeming to have religion, yet the beſt was but as a brier, through the abounding of iniquitie, and the corruption of the times; the very beſt did ſcratch and teare one another: Thoſe Prophets and holy ſervants of God only excepted, which were extraordinarily guided and caried by the Spirit of the Lord. That the Prophet *Micah* bids, *Truſt not a friend, neither put confidence in a Counſellour*, [no not in them who ſeemed to give the beſt advice.] Keepe the doore of thy mouth (ſaith he) from her that lieth in thy boſome. *The ſonne revileth the father, the daughter riſeth againſt the mother, the daughter in law againſt the mother in law, and a mans enemies are they of his owne houſe.* Whereby that poore Prophet was driven to that reſolution, *that he would looke to the Lord, and wait for God his Saviour, and he would heare him.* He had none elſe in the earth to rely upon, nor to ſeeke unto for helpe. Thus he ſpeaketh in the perſon of the true Church, even of all thoſe who were truly godly, and are commanded to be marked, which mourned for the abominations; whom he in the firſt verſe of that 7. Chapter cals, *the ſummer gatherings, and the grapes left after the vintage*; bewailing the ſmal number of them; *that he could not finde any bunch with which he might comfort himſelfe.*

Micah 7. 4. The beſt but as a brier.

The lamentation of *Micah* for the diviſions.

Verſ. 5.

Verſ. 6.

Verſ. 7. That the Church had none to looke unto, but unto the Lord.

Verſ. 1. And the number of them exceeding ſmall, as the grapes after the vintage.

And

And whereas the enemies, that sought only the spoile of the people and of the Church of God, might in their divisions, and the small number of the good plainly see the very ruine of them all, and thereupon might rejoyce over them, as being overcome already by themselves before the vengeance came, thus the Prophet speakes in the person of the Church to all those insolent enemies: *Reioyce not against me oh mine enemie, though I fall I shall arise: when I shall sit in the darknesse, the Lord shall be a light unto me. I will beare the wrath of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, untill hee plead my cause and execute judgement for me. Then will he bring me forth unto the light, and I shall see his righteousnesse. Shee that is mine enemie shall looke upon it, shee shall looke upon* the Lords deliverance of me, and his execution of judgement for mee upon mine enemies; *and shame shall cover her, which said unto mee, where is the Lord thy God. Mine eyes shall behold her, now shall shee be trodden downe as the mire in the streets.* Thus shee comforts her selfe against her enemies, that so triumphed looking for her utter ruine, and who would so insult over her, when they should see her misery. And hitherto of the lamentable divisions which were amongst them before the Captivitie.

Verse. 8. How the Church comforts her selfe against the insulting of the enemie.
Verse. 9.
Verse. 10.

Before we come to the application hereof, here ariseth another question to be answered, which doth most neerely concerne our times, and trouble very many, and is most directly answered from this history concerning the sundrie divisions at this day, like as there were amongst them.

A question answered.

Quest. In so many divisions as are in the world (as amongst us some Papists, other Protestants, as all of us who truly professe the Gospell, and protest against Antichrist and his religion, and of these some more strict, separating themselves as much as they are well able, from all corruptions, and from all familiar conversing with the wicked) yea some of them (though without ground) fearing even to communicate with any wicked person, and abstaining thereupon from the Lords table, for feare of their sinnes; others caring for none of these things, but laughing at all, to whom should a man cleave?

Quest. In so many divisions to whom to joyne?

Answ. For the Popish sort and the prophane, we are sure that we are not to joyne our selves, for we have seene how they anger the

Answ.

the Lord, and pull upon themselves and all others his vengeance, so farre as they can. And for the rest, if we wil escape in the day of the Lords vengeance, we must doe as those holy Prophets and the mourners did. We must sticke fast unto the Lord and his Covenant, and to all those whom we see (holding the communion of Saints, as *Ieremie* and all these mourners did) to come neerest in their lives and conversations to that Covenant of the Lord which we all professe; to make conscience thereof, and so of the good waies of God; and are most carefull to keepe themselves free from the Abominations that anger the Lord. For although it hath pleased the Divine wisdome, to leave some smaller controversies in our Church, and those even amongst his deerest servants, to exercise and to humble us withall (as there must be something even unto the end of the world) yet every one who maketh conscience to walke uprightly in that holy Covenant of the Lord, wherein wee all agree, is undoubtedly his deare servant. As wee make no doubt, but all those holy Martyrs were, who gave their bodies to be burnt to ashes for the same Covenant, even for the testimonie of Iesus Christ; though in these same controversies which most trouble the Church at this day, some were of the one minde, some of the other. Of all such therefore so walking, we are to account that they are joyned unto Christ, lively members of his body, those that mourne for the abominations, and whom God hath marked out before the vengeance come, and shall be then hid and united more fully, chiefly in the heavens; and shall in the meane time helpe to stay the wrath, and so all of them ought to be most deare unto us, as they are unto the Lord, and we ever to desire a firme union amongst them, even in the earth as it shall be in the heavens, all impediments being utterly removed. And thus much for answer hereunto.

For the application hereof, I leave it to every one of our owne soules, as before the Lord to consider of, and how farre we have proceeded in this sinne, whether he doe not hereby as plainly forewarne us, as ever he did them: having caused al these things to be written for us. Happie are we if by their wofull ensample wee can be warned to humble our selves to meet him with intreatie of peace, and to beg this firme union amongst our selves

Application left to our own soules.

selves in Christ, to love and favour them chiefly who are most deare unto him, walking most conscionably in his holy Covenant: then shall our prayers be accepted for appeasing the wrath.

Thus much also for the divisions of Iudah hastening the Captivitie, and what cause wee have hereupon to watch and pray, yea to weepe and wrastle with the Lord, that we may prevaile with his Majestie for a firme union among all his deare children.

Conclusion. And this may serve for their principall Abominations, chiefly provoking the Lord. Sundrie other there were amongst them, for which he threatneth them, and with most whereof we have also increased this wrath: which were also necessary to be set before our faces, if we were so humbled, as that we could vouchsafe them a due consideration, and to apply them to every of our hearts. But lest the worke should be farre too tedious, and hinder the good, which I trust the Lord will effect by it; I content my selfe with these, which may sufficiently smite every one of us downe upon our faces, to crie mightily unto the Lord to save us from the wrath to come: and will proceed unto that which remaineth; leaving the rest of the Abominations to our owne reading in those Prophets which lived before the Captivitie.

Chap. XII.

The meanes which the Lord had used to bring them to repentance, that he might spare them, and how in stead thereof their sinne was increased by the same. And what cause we have thence to watch and to pray.

HItherto we have seene sundrie of the principall Abominations angring the Lord, hastening the Captivitie. Now it remaineth that we come unto the meanes which the Lod had used to bring them to repentance, that he might spare them, and how in stead of repenting, their sinne

sinne was increased thereby, that the vengeance must needs come. And finally, the chiefe causes why all the meanes would doe them no more good to cause them to turne unto him.

The Lord had a long time called them to repentance, and striven with them by all possible meanes, whereby a people might be brought to amendment, as by the voice of his word, of his judgements and mercies, having left no ordinary meanes unattempted and used.

The Lord had striven with them by all meanes to bring them to repentance.

For his word, wee know how he oft chargeth them that hee had *sent unto them all his servants the Prophets, rising earely and sending, because he had compassion on his people and on his habitation.* And so had used all meanes by their ministerie to reclaime them, multiplying visions, and using similitudes, as he speakes by *Hosea.*

1. By his word. *Ierem.* 7. 25. 2 *Chron.* 36. 15. *Hosea* 12. 20.

Sometimes seeking to allure them by gratious promises: as first, by promises and offers of pardon of all their former sinnes; *That if they would turne, though their sinnes were as scarlet,* of a deepe and bloudie die, *yet they should be as snow and wooll.* So with promises of continuance in that place, and of outward prosperitie; *That if they would consent and obey, they should eat the good things of the Land.* Hee would be still their God, and they his people: which one promise contained in it all manner of blessings for the life present, so farre as should be good for them; and also for that to come.

Alluring them by promises, as 1. Of pardon. *Esay* 1. 16, 17, 18.

2. Of continuance and prosperitie. *Esay* 1. 19. *Ierem.* 7. 23.

Secondly, he had used all manner of threatnings, as of famine, pestilence, sword, captivitie, utter desolation, to make Ierusalem as a widow, and generally menacing them with all kinde of plagues and judgements, as we heard before, denounced against the severall abominations; to the end either to cause them to turne, or to leave them more without excuse. All which were therefore accomplished accordingly in the Captivitie, because they would not heare.

2. Menacing them by threatnings. *Esay* 1. 3.

Thirdly, he had beene wont to intreat them lovingly by the ministerie of his servants. As by the Prophet *Ieremie: Oh Ierusalem wash thy heart from thy wickednesse, that thou mayest be saved; How long shall thy wickednesse remaine with thee?* And in another place: *Oh yee disobedient children returne,* saith the Lord, *for I am your Lord.* And bids *Ezekiel* say unto them,

3. Intreating them. *Ierem.* 4. 14. *Jerem* 3. 13.

Ezek. 33. 11. *As I live saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turne from his way and live.* And thereupon *Ezekiel* cries unto them in most tender compassion; *Turne yee, turne yee, for why will you die oh yee house of Israel?* Thus the Lord continued (as he saith) *all the day long* [by his holy Prophets] *stretching out his hands to a disobedient and gain-saying people.*

Esay 65. 2.

4. Lamenting for them by his Ministers.

Ier. 4. 19, 20, 21.

Lastly, he had used also to lament over them by his servants, mourning in fore-seeing their miseries, as *Ieremie* crieth out; *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at the very heart. My heart is troubled within me, I cannot be still. My soule hath heard the sound of the trumpet and the alarum of the battell. Destruction upon destruction,* &c. *For my people are foolish people, they have not knowne me.* Whereupon the Prophet wisheth *his eyes a fountaine of teares, to weepe for them day and night.* And not only so, but the Lord, even as it were, troubled in himselfe, moaneth their case: As our Saviour did after, when he wept over Ierusalem, *Oh Ierusalem, Ierusalem*; so by the Prophet *Hoseah* he lamenteth thus for all the house of Israel, *How shall I give thee up Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is* * *turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.* And by the Prophet *Micah* thus tenderly and compassionatly he calleth unto them, pitying their foolishnesse, saying, *Oh my people, what have I done unto thee, or wherewith have I grieved thee! testifie against me.* And then sets downe the kindnesses which he had shewed to them, and how unkind they had beene to him againe.

Ier. 9. 1.

By himselfe. Luke 10. 41, 42.

Hosea 11. 8.

al. * turned upon me, my repentings are waxed hot.

Micah 6. 3, 4.

Thus have we seene how he recalled them by his word, that he might spare them, or otherwise leave them utterly inexcusable; but how they dealt with his messengers we have seene before; how they mocked and misused them for all this kindnesse, untill there was no remedie.

2 Chr. 36. 15, 16.

The Lord called them also by the continuall voice of his mercies.

Ierem. 2. 6, 7.

Besides this, he had also ever called upon them, by the voice of his mercies, striving to overcome them and win them thereby. As namely by that whereof they ought to have kept a continuall remembrance, to have retained them in a perpetuall obedience; *That he brought them out of the Land of Egypt, even out of the iron furnace, by such wonderfull miracles and plaguing their*

enemies.

enemies. How he led them thorow the wildernesse in such visible manner, feeding and speaking to them from heaven; giving them his Law immediatly, and placing them in so plentifull a Countrey, the Garden of the world. He planted them in that fertill hill, using all meanes to make them fruitfull ever since they came out of Egypt. For outward blessings he had fed them to the full, in that good Land flowing with milke and honey. He had given them the first and latter raine, reserving for them the appointed times of the harvest: though their iniquities had turned away good things from them. Their Land was also full of silver and gold, there was no end of their treasures; it was full of horses and chariots. They had in like manner received such deliverances, as never any Nation of the world, even of late time, as in *Iehosophats, Hezekiahs* and *Manasses* daies. And finally, they were advanced in priviledges above all the people of the earth, as we saw before. So that the Lord might justly demand as he doth, what hee could have done any more for them (that is, in regard of the outward meanes) which he had not done And thus much for the mercies whereby he had so long called upon them to repent.

Esay 5. 1.

Ierem. 7. 15.
Jerem. 5. 7.

Esay 2. 7.

Esay. 5. 4.

How the Lord called them to repent by the voice of his rods, both bodily and spirituall.

Now to come to the voice of his judgements. When all the rest will doe them no good, he is enforced to smite them with all his rods, and that most severely, to trie if yet hereby he might save them from his most heavie vengeance. As first by horrible oppressions amongst themselves, each spoiling other. *Godly and mercifull men taken away, none laying it to heart. Good men becomming rare, as the Summer gatherings, and the grapes after the vintage*; living also in extreme hatred and disgrace, the wicked in honour. The Prophets being generally given over to flatterie and covetousnesse, prophecying for filthy lucre, crying still peace, peace.

Esay 5. 7.
Hab. 1. 2, 3, 4.
Esay 57. 1.
Micah 7. 1.
Micah. 3. 2.

The Lord moreover smit them not only with outward famine of the body, as he had denounced, but also with that inward famine threatned by *Amos*, that is, of hearing the Word to their salvation, so as to rebuke them for their sinnes, and turne them from their evill waies. They might heare it only of the flatterers and time-servers, towards the time of the Captivitie approaching at hand, but for the faithfull Prophets, as *Ieremie*

Ierem. 14. 1, 2.
Amos 8. 11, 12.

Ierem. 36. *Ezek.* 3. 36.

and *Ezekiel*, the Lord had caused their tongues to cleave to the rooſes of their mouthes. Hee had many times alſo threatned them with the ſword of the enemie, and ſometimes likewiſe made them to taſte of it, chiefly in their outward borders: whereupon the Prophet *Eſay* crieth out, *that the head was ſicke, and the whole heart heavie, from the ſole of the foot unto the crowne, there was no whole part.* Both in Church and Common-wealth, his judgements had appeared, which way ſoever they looked. Yea the Lord had ſo ſmitten them, as that hee was weary with ſmiting, and asketh, *why he ſhould ſtrike them any more, ſeeing that they fell away more and more.* They herein became worſe than the Oxe and the Aſſe, as he calleth heaven and earth to witneſſe againſt them: becauſe they knew their owners, who fed, guided them, and alſo ſtrucke them, but his people for all theſe, would not yet know the Lord, nor underſtand, but ſtill became more ſinfull, *loaden with iniquitie, going backward, falling away more and more.* So that the Lord having thus ſought the ſparing of them, by all theſe waies and many moe, and chiefly by ſo many of his faithfull Prophets ſent unto them, when at length no meanes will ſerve, like as the father is compelled to caſt off his lewd childe, and to leave him to the ſtubbornneſſe of his owne heart, to doe what he will, and to ſtrive with him no more, even ſo did he; for he then gave them up wholly to that judgement threatned long before, the heavieſt that ever fell upon mans heart; That *they ſhould heare indeed*, but *not underſtand*: They *ſhould ſee his* judgements and mercies, whereby he called them to repentance, pitying them; but yet their eyes ſhould be ſo blinded, their eares ſo deafe, and their hearts ſo hard, as that they ſhould not relent, nor have grace to turne. They ſhould come to take all that ever the Lord did unto them, as ordinarie matters, and ſo have the vengeance increaſed by them, but not to receive it, as from his hand, to move them to repentance.

Eſay 1. 5. No part whole becauſe of Gods rods.

The Lord was weary with ſmiting them. *Verſ.* 3.

Eſay 1. 4.

And after a ſort inforced to give them up to their owne hearts luſt, and to this induration. *Eſay* 6. 10.

Hereby they came to this height of impenitencie and induration, that when the Lord called them by his judgements to faſting, weeping and mourning, either they ſcoffed utterly at any ſuch worke, or in their extremitie being inforced to it, they did it only for a faſhion. Of the firſt, that is, of their ſcoffing at his

The higheſt ſtep of their induration and impenitencie, that they were given over to

his threatnings, beſides all thoſe mentioned and all other, God hath recorded one moſt fearefull enſample. Whereas this had beene the cuſtome of Gods people, when hee had ſhewed any token of his anger, to aſſemble together in faſting, and mourning, thereby to ſeeke to pacifie his wrath by prayer, and generall turning unto him, as wee may ſee in the holy Storie; the Lord laid this unto their charge, that when all theſe tokens of his wrath were upon them, and that he did by them all, *call them to weeping, mourning, and girding with ſack-cloth*, to prevent his vengeance; they in ſtead thereof, to provoke him to a preſent execution of his judgement, gave themſelves over to all jollitie and exceſſe, in eating and drinking, as it were in contempt of the Lord and his threatnings. Thus ſcoffing, *that to morrow they muſt die*, meaning, as the Prophets threatned. This ſinne, ſaith *Eſay*, *was declared in the eares of the Lord of hoſts*, as the top and chiefe of all their ſinnes, and the very filling up of their meaſure; which cauſed the Lord to enter into this determinate and unchangeable reſolution, and to ſpeake thus: *Surely this iniquitie ſhall not be purged from you till yee die*, ſaith the Lord God of hoſts.

all exceſſe, and to ſcoffe at the Lords warnings, when he called them to repentance. *Ioel* 2. 12, 13, 14, 15.

Eſay 22. 12.

Verſ. 14. This ſinne could not be purged.

Of the ſecond, that is, of their humbling themſelves for a faſhion, the Lord complaines ſpecially in the 58. of *Eſay*, That when they had kept any ſuch a faſt, it was but in ſhew and in imminent perill, *wherein they did for a day bow downe their head like a bulruſh, and it may be goe in ſack-cloth and aſhes, but they would not turne from their evill way; they would not looſe the bands of wickedneſſe, nor take off the heavie burdens, and let the oppreſſed goe free. They would not deale their bread to the hungrie, give themſelves to the workes of mercie, and compaſſion towards the poore.* Such a faſt they had, *Ierem.* 36. 16. and many ſeemed to be touched with it for the preſent; and that at the bare reading of that which *Baruch* had written, from the mouth of *Ieremie*; but becauſe it was but meerely outward and hypocriticall, it did but increaſe the wrath.

Eſay 58. 5, 6.

Ierem. 36. 16.

So have we ſeene the outward meanes, which the Lord uſed to have brought them to repentance, and to have ſaved them. It remaineth that we ſhew in a word ſome of the cauſes, why they were not moved by all theſe meanes. As firſt the flatteries of

Some cauſes of their induration, and why they profited not by the meanes. As, 1. The flatteries of the Prophets.

of the Prophets are noted oft, to have beene a speciall cause of their hardning generally by their crying *peace, peace*; whereby *they strengthened the hands of all the wicked that they could not turne*, as was declared, *and withall the disgrace and hatred, that the true Prophets and all the godly lived in.* Secondly, their carnall confidence in the Temple, and in their ceremoniall worship and observations; as also in their good King *Iosiah*, whilst they enjoyed him, *under whose shadow they said they should be preserved amongst the heathen*, let the enemie be never so strong or malicious: This was another principall meanes to harden them. Thirdly, for the Idolaters, they were blinded hereby also, because that they thought, that those daies of Idolatrie were better than the present, like as they reason against *Ieremy*, *Ier.* 44. Fourthly, the Atheists and all the rest were made obstinate by this, for that though the Prophets had long threatned this vengeance, yet it came not. And therefore they accounted their words but as winde, and not to be feared now that they had escaped them so long. Fifthly, the ensamples of many of chiefe note, even of their leaders, caused them to erre, as the Prophets doe shew. Finally, the terrible vengeance of the Lord justly inflicted for all their abominations, and principally for their obstinacie against all the meanes, and therein resisting the Holy Ghost; so to give them up to this extreme induration, that he might accomplish all his wrath upon them, as he had threatned them in his law, and as he had forewarned them by *Esay*, *untill their cities were wasted without an inhabitant, their houses without a man, and their land utterly desolate.* Thus have we seene also some of the chiefe meanes and causes of their induration.

2 Carnall confidence in the Temple and some priviledges.
Ier. 7. 4.
Lam. 4. 20.
3 Idolaters hardned by their former daies of plenty.
Ier. 44. 17.
4 Atheists and profane by the deferring Gods judgements.
5 The examples of the greatest.
6 The vengeance of God upon them.
Acts 7. 51.
Deut. 28.
Esay 6. 11.

Why the Lord would spare them no longer after he had used all meanes to reclaime them.
Esay 5. 4.
Esay 1. 24.

Now when the Lord had used all these means and many moe to reclaime them, so that he asketh, *what he could have done more for them, which he had not done*; and yet they in stead thereof still grieved him more and more by their sinnes, he could then spare them no longer, but enters into this resolution.

First, *to ease himselfe of them, because he was even pressed under their sinnes, as the cart under the sheaves*; *and because they had made him to serve with their sinnes* (as the Prophet speakes) *and wearied him with their iniquities.* And therefore thus he denounceth

1 To ease himselfe of them.
Amos 2. 13.
Esay 43. 24.
Esay 1. 24.

nounceth concerning them: *Ah I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.* *Esay* 5.4,5,6.

Secondly, because he cannot alwaies beare with the generall unfruitfulnesse of his vineyard, but when he hath bestowed all possible cost and paines about it, and looked for fruit, and it still deceives him, then he comes to this resolute determination, to take away the hedge and the wall of it, and to let it to be eaten up and trodden downe, and utterly laid waste. 2 Because he cannot alwaies endure the unfruitfulnesse of his vineyard.

Thirdly, he did it, for the cause even of his owne children, who in secure and evill times doe gather much corruption, and receive many noisome humours, and therefore have need of some very strong purgations, to preserve life, and to restore them againe. The Lord at such times is as it were inforced to cast his into the fire of affliction, to trie them, yea to purge and purifie them, that they may come forth more pretious than the gold, and recover their former excellencie and brightnesse againe. 3 To purifie his owne children. *Esay* 1.22.25. *Vers.* 25.

Fourthly, for the cause of the hypocrites, who are wont to justifie themselves, and say, *Because I am guiltlesse, surely his wrath shall turne from me. Behold I will enter with thee into judgement*, saith the Lord, *because thou saiest, I have not sinned.* 4 For hypocrites who imagine themselves guiltlesse. *Ierem.* 2.35.

Fifthly, that the Lord hereby may be justified both in verifying whatsoever he hath threatned in his law, and what he hath denounced by his servants, and also that he may be declared to be the just Iudge of all the world, and therefore that he cannot suffer the wicked alwaies, howsoever he endure them long: that he is the God that cannot beare iniquitie, but hates sinne with a perfect hatred. 5 That he may be justified. *Ierem.* 5.14,15. *Esay* 49.2. *Zach.* 1.6.

Sixthly, to shew the love that he beares to his servants and messengers, that they are unto him as deare as *the apple of his owne eie*: and that when they come to *mocke his faithfull servants, and to misuse his ambassadours*, whom he sends in the riches of his mercy, that he may save them, *then there is no more remedie*: for so he spake of these, *They mocked his servants, and misused his messengers, untill there was no more remedie.* 6 To shew his love to his servants, and that he cannot endure the misusing of his messengers. *Zach.* 2.8. 2 *Chron.* 36.15, 16.

Seventhly and lastly, that he may make all Atheists and unbeleevers to know and to acknowledge him by his righteous judgements, who by all former meanes could never be brought there- 7 To make Atheists to know him, and all sorts to cry unto him.

Zach. 1. 6.
Exod. 8. 9.
Exod. 9. 28.
Dan. 4. 30, 31.
Hosea 5. 15.
Ierem. 22. 21.
Ierem. 31. 18.

thereunto; but aske scoffingly, where is the God of vengeance? like *Pharao* and *Nabuchadnezzar*. And so in their affliction to make them to seeke him diligently, which in their prosperitie kicked up the heele against him.

Application.

To returne unto our owne selves. If the Lord shall examine us strictly, which of these meanes in effect and in very deed he hath not used with us, if we should goe over them one by one; or which of the former abominations wee have not beene as guiltie of, what could we answer? Or if he should plainly denounce unto us, that even for these very reasons for which he executed his vengeance on them, hee could not but must needs enter into judgement with us (our sinne being herein especially increased above theirs, that our light is so much more glorious, and the Gospell offers more grace, and also for that he hath so oft and so lately come so neere unto us in judgement; and yet so miraculously delivered us, giving our enemies for our ransome) must we not of necessitie fall upon our faces crying for pardon, acknowledging that it hath beene his infinit mercie that he hath spared us hitherto, and that wee have not beene utterly consumed, and all because his compassions have not failed? Thinke of it and understand.

Lament. 3. 22.
Malach. 3. 6.

Particular application deferred to Chap. 13.

But for the more speciall application hereof, I will deferre it unto the end of the next Chapter, when we shall have seene the particular miseries which they endured in the Captivitie, when no other meanes would serve; and how the Lord doth lament over us at this very day, that we know not the time of our visitation. Thus much therefore for the meanes which the Lord used to bring them to repentance, that he might spare them: and what need wee have all to watch and pray continually for the same cause, seeing he (so farre as I can conceive) hath left no ordinary outward meanes untried or unoffered amongst us for our amendment, and yet we so generally wax worse and worse unto this day. And more also, for that a people comming to such a height of sinne, the Lord must needs punish as we have heard.

Micah 6. 3.
Luke 19. 41, 42, 43.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

The ſeveritie of the Lords vengeance, and the miſeries which all ſorts endured in the Captivitie, when no other meanes could ſerve to reclaime them. What need we have all to watch and pray continually to turne away all ſuch plagues from us. And likewiſe what thankfulneſſe we owe unto his Majeſtie for all our former deliverances from the like calamities, which have beene ſo oft and ſo neere unto us, to forewarne us if it be poſſible, and bring us to repentance.

VERSE 5. *And to the others he ſaid in my hearing, Goe yee after him thorow the Citie and ſmite: let not your eye ſpare, neither have yee pitie. 6. Slay utterly old and young; both maids, and little children, and women; but come not neere any man upon whom is the marke, and begin at my Sanctuary: then they began at the ancient men, which were before the houſe. 7. And he ſaid unto them, Defile the houſe, and fill the courts with the ſlaine; goe yee forth: and they went forth and ſlew in the Citie.*

WE have ſeene ſundrie of the abominations angring the Lord, and provoking him againſt *Iudah*, to bring all his plagues upon them, and alſo how he uſed all poſſible meanes to reclaime them, that he might ſpare them, becauſe he had pitie upon his inheritance, and tendered them above all the people of the earth; neither would he have done it, if there had beene any other remedie, or meanes to heale them, as himſelfe ſpeakes in the ſhutting up of all, 2 *Chron.* 36. 16. Now it remaineth that we come to the ſeveritie of the Lords judgement, and the grievous miſeries which he brought upon them all, when no other meanes

Eſay 5. 4. The ſeveritie of the Lords judgement, when no other meanes can ſerve.

Effects of the due conſideration hereof. *Ierem.* 31. 21. *Eſay* 63. 9, 10.

meanes could doe them any more good. When as no other way would prevaile, neither the warnings of his Prophets, nor his continuall mercies, threatnings, intreaties, long patience and waiting, milder judgements, nor more gentle rods, then is the Lord even as it were inforced, like as a loving father with his ſtubborne childe, to uſe this moſt ſharpe ſcourge, here foreſhewed unto the Prophet. The very conſideration whereof is able to breake a ſtonie heart, to wring teares out of a flint, to make the wickedeſt man or woman to tremble, and to awake us all out of our deepe ſecuritie, unleſſe the Lord have determined to inflict ſome ſuch a terrible judgement upon us, and therefore doe ſend upon us the *ſpirit of ſlumber, eies that ſeeing we ſhould not behold it, nor be able to have our hearts touched, leſt we ſhould convert, and he heale us.* *Eſay* 6. 9, 10.

The Lamentations of *Jeremie* written to ſet out this miſery.

The Prophet *Ieremie* may herein be our Prophet alone, bewailing this their miſery in his *Lamentations*, which were delivered by the Spirit of God only to that purpoſe, and for the perpetuall admonition of the Church. Wherein he declareth how the Lord did then accompliſh al the threatnings of the Prophets upon them; even all thoſe calamities, which they in their proſperitie, nor any other, would ever have beleeved to have beene poſſible to have come upon Ieruſalem, that the enemies could ever have entred within her gates. As it was indeed impoſſible, ſo long as they obeied the Lord, by the very enemies confeſſion.

The Lord then accompliſhed whatſoever he had threatned, even thoſe things that ſeemed impoſſible to come on them. *Lam.* 4. 11, 12.

1. To make a way for the ſword, and for all this deſolation, the Lord takes away firſt that worthy *Ioſiah*, their ſhelter, the breath of their noſtrils, that his eyes ſhould not ſee the vengeance. Concerning whom, they lament thus: *The breath of our noſtrils, the anointed of the Lord was taken in their nets, of whom we ſaid, under his ſhadow we ſhall be preſerved alive among the Heathen.* Wherein they ſeeme evidently to acknowledge their carnall confidence, even of the beſt of them, which they had in their holy King, in that they ſpake thus of him, and that this provoked the Lord to take him away from them, and to leave them to the enemie; that they might ſee in what they had truſted and ſecured themſelves, withdrawing their hearts from the living God, in ſtead of humbling themſelves unfainedly, for all their abominations.

1. *Ioſiah* their ſhelter in whom they truſted, is taken away. *Lament.* 4. 20. Their carnall confidence in *Ioſiah* ſeemeth to have provoked the Lord to take him away.

2. The

2. The Lord having thus made a way to his wrath, he presently within three moneths, brought in the bloudie ſword, (as we ſaw before) and never ſuffered his anger to ceaſe, untill this finall and full execution of his vengeance by the Babylonian was accompliſhed upon them.

But to come only to the lamentable declaration of this terrible wrath now at this time, here ſpoken of, and the ſeverall miſeries which all ſorts endured, to awaken us the better, to looke to our ſelves in time. And firſt for the famine that they abid in the time of the ſiege, as the fore-runner of the ſword, and companied with the ſword, and with all other calamities. The holy Ghoſt hath recorded, that it was ſo grievous upon them, that all the people, even the wealthieſt of them, *did ſigh in ſeeking their bread, and were glad to ſell their moſt pretious jewels and riches, to buy a little food to refreſh their ſoules. The very Prieſts and Elders periſhed, dying for hunger, whilſt they ſought bread to ſave their lives. Thoſe that had fed moſt delicately periſhed in the ſtreets. And they that had beene brought up moſt ſumptuouſly, and cloathed in their ſilkes and ſcarlets, were glad to embrace the dung*; to ſeeke their food in the very dung-hils. *Her Nazarites whoſe skins were whiter than milke, more ruddie with fine bloud than the Carbuncle, more ſmooth than the poliſhed Saphire*; yet even *their viſages through famine became blacker than a coale, that a man could not know them in the ſtreets, their skinnes cleaved to their bones, and were withered as ſtocks. The compaſſionate mothers were become more cruell than the Dragons, that they drew not out their breſts to give ſucke to their tender babes. Whereby the tongues of the ſucking children clave to the roofes of their mouthes for thirſt. The poore infants ſwooned in the ſtreets, and crying for bread and drinke, gave up the ghoſt in their mothers boſomes.* And that thing which of all other Nature moſt abhorreth, and we tremble but to thinke upon; *the tender hearted mothers* (in ſtead of any compaſſion to theſe poore babes) *were compelled through extremitie of hunger, to eat the fruit of their owne bodies, their children of a ſpan long*, as the Lord had threatned they ſhould, if they would not obey. And to ſhut up this firſt point of their miſerable calamity, the holy Ghoſt ſaith, *That the hands of the pitifull mothers ſod their own children, which were their meat in the deſtructiō of*

2 Immediatly after his death began their miſeries.

The woefull miſeries which they endured at this time.

1.

Famine making all to ſigh in ſeeking their bread.
Lament. 1. 11.
Wealthieſt faine to ſell their jewels to buy bread.
Lament. 1. 19.
Lament. 4. 5.
Prieſts and Elders periſh with hunger.
Imbrace the dung.
Verſ. 7.
The Nazarites became blacke and withered as ſtockes.
Mothers unnaturall and cruel to their children.
Lament. 4. 3, 4
Sucking babes periſhing with thirſt in the mothers boſomes.
Lam 2. 11, 12.
Mothers compelled to eat their owne children.
Lament. 2. 24.
Lament. 4. 10.
The hands of the pitifull

mothers seething their owne children.

2. The destructiō by the sword. *Lament.* 2. 20.

1. Priests and Prophets slaine in the Sāctuary.

2. The Princes hanged up. *Lament.* 5. 12.

Nobles made as earthen pitchers. *Lament.* 4. 2.

3. Old and young lie slaine in the streets. 2 *Chron.* 36. 17. *Lament.* 2. 10.

The Elders which escaped glad to seeke holes to save their lives.

The shame of their virgins. *Lament.* 2. 10. *Lament.* 5. 11.

3. The desolations of the Temple. *Lament.* 2. 7.

The Sanctuary forsaken and abhorred.

Given up to the Heathen.

The brutish souldiers shouting in it.

of the daughter of Ierusalem. But this may suffice to shew us the miseries which they endured by famine, and that it was indeed so great as no heart can thinke. To come therefore to the destruction by the sword.

1. To begin with the slaughter of the Priests. Like as the Lord had threatned, so it came to passe, *That both the Priests and Prophets were slaine even in his house, and in his very Sanctuarie, to defile it with their bloud,* as they had done formerly with their abominations, neither reverence nor compassion could any thing restraine the outrage of the barbarous souldier. 2. *They hanged up the Princes,* those who should have restrained and redressed the sinnes: *they regarded not the faces of any. The noble men of Sion, which in their prosperitie were compared to fine gold, were now esteemed no better than earthen pitchers,* for the rude souldiers to dash in peeces, and to tread upon every where in the streets. 3. *All sorts both old and young together lie abroad slaine in the streets, the virgins and the young men fell by the sword, killed without any pitie.* And for those who escaped the sword, their case was much worse, for now they were subject to all kind of calamities which follow a poore vanquished people. *The verie Elders and Rulers are faine to seeke corners to hide themselves, and to sit upon the ground in silence,* shivering and quaking, and as it were alwaies dying, if by any meanes they can save their lives. *They cast dust upon their heads, sitting girded in sack-cloth. The beautifull virgins hang downe their heads to the ground for shame, for the cruell beastlinesse of the filthy souldiers, for they defiled the women in Sion, and the maids in the Cities of Iudah.* And so much also for the mercilesse slaughters and beastly cruelties exercised upon all sorts.

Now to come to the desolations, and first of the Temple. For the Sanctuary where the Lord bids the souldiers to begin and to defile it; *The Lord forsooke it,* even that, to which his promises were made. *Yea he so abhorred it, as he gave it into the hands of the uncircumcised Heathen, whom he had commanded, that they should not enter into it. The brutish souldiers now made a noise in the Temple, in shouting and blaspheming the Lord there,* as his owne people were wont to doe in praising his name. And after that they had spoiled and defaced it, and taken all the treasures

our

out of it, they then ſet fire upon it, and ſo burnt the houſe of the Lord. So that all the ſervice of God ceaſed there, the Law was no more heard there, neither could the Prophets any more receive any viſion there, nor yet the people heare the voice of the Lord any more.

After the deſtruction of the Temple ſucceeded the deſolation of the Citie, and of the whole Nation. For the proud ſouldiers ſet fire on the Citie, beat downe the walls: *So that the Citie lay deſolate that was full of people, now ſhee became a ſolitarie widow, and all the daies that ſhee lay thus without inhabitant, ſhee kept a continuall Sabbath for ſeventie yeeres, to have her full of Sabbaths,* for all thoſe which they polluted before.

But to come unto the ſhame and reproach that now was caſt upon the Lord and his people, which was farre greater than all the former, and muſt needs continually pierce their very ſoules. The *inſolent* ſouldiers, and other vile enemies did moſt proudly *triumph over her,* to ſee her in this caſe, remembring the honour that ſhee had lived in before. *All that paſſed by the way clapped their hands at her, reviled and wagged their heads againſt Ieruſalem,* ſaying, *Is this the Citie that men call the perfection of beauty, and the joy of the whole earth? They hiſſed and gnaſhed their teeth,* ſaying, *Let us devoure it. Certainly this is the day that we have ſo long looked for; we have found and ſeene it. All that honoured her before for her excellencie, now begin to deſpiſe her for her ſhame, becauſe they have ſeene her filthineſſe: That ſhee now became as the off-ſcouring and refuſe in the midſt of the Nations.*

As for the people that were remaining yet alive, and had eſcaped from the ſword and all other miſeries, they were carried away captives, to be made ſlaves in their enemies land. That now their owne inheritance being turned unto ſtrangers, and their houſes to aliens, they endured under the enemie all kinde of crueltie and ſlavery, hunger and ſhame. All their joy was now turned into mourning. *Shee weepes continually, the teares runne downe by her cheekes, her eyes faile with weeping. Their ſorrow was ſo great, as that their bowels ſwelled, their hearts turned within them, their livers powred upon the ground. Then they cried unto the Lord in the night, powred out their hearts like water before him;*

Captivitie. Their joy gone. Greatneſſe of their ſorrowes. *Lament.* 3. 2. *Lament.* 2. 11. 19.

Set fire on the Temple.
2 *Chron.* 36. 19.
All the ſervice of God ceaſed there.

4.
The finall deſolation that came upon them.
The City fired.
Deſolate as a widow.
Lament. 1. 1.
2 *Chron.* 36. 21.
Now keeping Sabbaths.

5.
The ſhame caſt upon the Lord and his people.
The inſolent ſouldiers triumphing.
Lam. 2. 15, 16.
Reviling and wagging their heads.
All deſpiſe her for her filthineſſe.
Lament. 1. 8.
Lament. 3. 45.
Shee made the off-ſcouring of all.

6.
The people that eſcaped carried captives.
Lament. 1. 3, 5.
Miſeries in their

him; and yet when they thus crie and shout in their mourning, hee shutteth out their prayers, he will not heare them now according as he had threatned, *because they would not heare him before.*

All this she now acknowledgeth to be justly come upon her, because *shee rebelled against the word of the Lord sent unto her by his Prophets. Now shee admonisheth all people to be warned by her ensample.* And of all this calamitie, the Lord himselfe notes this to have beene as it were the maine and almost only cause, *for the sinnes of the Prophets, and iniquities of her Priests, that shed the blood of the just in the midst of her. Therefore they now wandred as blinde men,* [God so plagued their former wilfull blindnesse] and were polluted with bloud; he gave them bloud enough. So also for the manner of this their sinne, wee saw how the Lord did set it out in the history, as the shutting up of all, when hee shewed that there was no remedie, and as the filling up the measure of all their sinnes, yea as if all other had beene nothing to it. *That when he sent his messengers, rising earely and sending, because he had compassion on his people and on his habitation, they mocked his messengers, despised his word, and misused his Prophets, untill his wrath arose against his people, and that there was no remedie.* And then did the Lord all this, *he brought on them the King of Caldea,* &c. and desolation upon desolation, untill all this was accomplished.

Now to returne unto our selves. We see and know that their sinnes are ours, all or most of them, and that so deepely as theirs, so farre as I am able to discerne, (especially our times being considered and compared with that of *Iosiah*) if not much more in regard of our glorious light. We cannot but acknowledge withall, that the Lord hath used as many or moe meanes, and more strong for our reclaiming, than ever for them. And thirdly, that these our enemies of Rome, that spirituall Babylon, have as much sought, and doe to this day, to bring all these miseries upon us or heavier, as ever those enemies did upon them, and cannot give over so farre as we can see. And finally, as we have deserved it, for all our sinnes, so who hath forgotten that we have beene many a time entring into the very same condition, into the mouthes of the Lions? That we have had the cup at our heads to have drunken as deepely as ever did Iudah? That we have

They might crie, but none to heare. *Lament.* 3.8.

7. *Lament.* 1.18. Shee acknowledgeth all this just for rebelling against the word of the Lord. *Lament.* 14.13. Chiefly for the sinnes of the Priests and Prophets. *Vers.* 14. 2 *Chron.* 36.16. Despising Gods word, and misusing his messengers, caused that there could be no more remedie.

Application, why the Lord should not execute as heavie a judgement on us.

How we have deserved it. How neere we have beene unto it, and how ist.

have beene in the heart of the sea, and in the midst of the fiery furnace, and yet still reserved alive without any smell of the fire upon us?

And who now can be so wilfully blinded, considering these things aright, that he must not needs see that the vengeance so many wayes belonging to us, must needs also be ours as well as theirs, and our danger to be much greater thereby, than ever heretofore? That there is nothing that protects us, but even the gratious presence and pitifull compassion of our God. That which hath saved us hitherto, the same only doth still, though we seeke every day to banish it from amongst us. And who then can say any thing, why the Lord should not thus accomplish even all this wrath, or a heavier upon us? And if he should at length in his justice leave us into the hand of the bloudie enemie, in any new plot, whether our case should not be as evill, our misery as great?

The mourning of the Lord for his people before this execution. *Micah* 6. 3.

We heard how the Lord did even mourne over this his people by the Prophet *Micah*, long before hee executed this decree upon them, lamenting their cafe thus: *Oh my people, what have I done unto thee, or wherewith have I grieved thee? testifie against mee! Surely I brought thee up out of the Land of Ægypt, and redeemed thee out of the house of servants, and I have sent before thee, Moses, Aaron and Miriam! Oh my people, remember now what Balaak King of Moab had devised, and what Balaam the sonne of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal. that yee may know the righteousnesse of the Lord!* This was his lamentation for this people long before hee brought this vengeance. Now what eare is so deafe, or what heart is so senseleſſe, that hath not both formerly, and doth not still more and more heare our Lord and Saviour lamenting our foolishnesse, and complaining of our unkindnesse, and his bowels earning in beholding the miseries rushing upon us? Yea who heareth him not thus crying to us continually in his tender commiseration, even as for this people at that time, and as sometimes when he wept over Ierusalem?

Vers. 5.

The Lords expostulation after a sore mourning

Oh my people whom I have preferred in so many respects, and so highly exalted, what have I done unto thee? wherewith have I grieved thee? come testifie against me. Did I not fetch

over us for our fooliſh impenitencie and unkindneſſe.

fetch thee out of the ſlavery of Egypt and Babylon, and from the Iron furnace of Antichriſts tyrannie, from the midſt of that thicke darkneſſe that might be felt, from that moſt palpable drudgery and heatheniſh Idolatrie? Did I not ſo manifeſtly diſcover unto thee the witchcrafts and whoredomes of that old *Iezabel*, that whore of Babylon, and all her deuices whereby ſhe had ſo inchanted thee, robbed and ſpoiled thee, and did as a Queene reigne over thee; that men of all ſorts, yea even very children ſaw and abhorred her execrable deluſions, whereby ſhe had cauſed thee to commit all filthie abominations, to the angring of thy God? And when thou ſaweſt how ſhee had made thee to worſhip ſtockes and ſtones; yea how ſhe had bewitched and beguiled thee by her Pardons, Pilgrimages, Purgatories, Maſſes and Images: how ſhe had tyrannized over thee, over thy Kings and Princes, and even over thy conſcience to bring thee to perdition, thruſting me forth; didſt thou not hereupon moſt juſtly caſt off the ſtrumpet, and make her odious and deſolate? And didſt thou not then ſet me up to be thy God, even by publike authoritie and conſent?

Moreover, doeſt thou not remember when for thy unthankfulneſſe I left thee againe, but for a little ſpace into her hand, how ſhee deſtroyed my religion, ſet up her Idols, cauſed thee to fall downe againe before them, as formerly ſhe had done? How ſhee perſecuted thy confeſſors, and executed all her crueltie upon them, burnt thy Martyrs to aſhes? Haſt thou forgotten how I did againe heare thy ſighes, delivering thee the ſecond time from that cruell oppreſſion, and ſent before thee *Moſes*, *Aaron*, and *Miriam*? How I raiſed up for thee my renowned handmaid *Elizabeth*, to be thy governour and protector, and with her many worthy Nobles and Rulers, with ſundrie famous learned men in the ſeverall parts of thy land; ſince that time ſetting forth mine owne true worſhip and pure religion, both by their preaching, writings and holy living, and by them diſcloſing againe all the myſterie of Antichriſts iniquitie, that doctrine of deuils and tyrannie of Rome, ſetting it abroad to the view of the world; that all might ſee and abhorre it ſtill more and more, thus leading thee towards Canaan?

Remember oh my people, what all the Kings of the earth (who

(who had given their power to the beaſt) had conſulted againſt thee, how they had conſpired in that bloudie league, never to have ceaſed untill they had conſumed thee utterly from off the face of the earth, and that thou ſhouldeſt no longer have beene a people, nor my name and religion ever heard of in thee any more. And yet how I have oft in a moment deſtroyed their counſels and overthrowne their deepeſt conſpiracies? Call to minde, oh my people, what that old *Balaam* of Rome had deviſed againſt thee, when all other meanes failed: that horrible curſe wherewith he curſed thee, excommunicating mine Anointed, raiſing thy ſubjects to rebellion and civill diſſention, thereby to ruinate thee by thy ſelfe, or to lay thee open as a prey to the mercileſſe enemie! And how I yet then turned all his curſes into bleſſings! Canſt thou ever forget the multitude of croaking frogs, the Seminaries and Ieſuits, ſent forth from that falſe Prophet, from time to time, to ſeduce thee, and to ſtirre thee up to battell and to rebellion againſt thy Lord and Saviour, and againſt mine Anointed; and to bring thee into that Ægyptian ſlavery againe, and how I have ſtill preſerved thee? How I have ſtill from time to time detected theſe ſeducers, and all their wickedneſſe, and brought many of them to that ſhame, which they ſought to bring upon thee? Is it poſſible that that proud Armado ſhould ever be forgotten of thee, their inſolent triumphs aforehand over thee; the inſtruments of their crueltie prepared for thy torture? And how when thou criedſt unto me in that terrour, humbling thy ſelfe in faſting and prayer, I tooke thy cauſe into my hand; ſeeing their rage was for my cauſe, and even againſt me? How I of a ſudden armed both winds and waters to fight for thee, as from heaven, to take vengeance upon them, and to deliver them into thy hands; that ſo thou ſaweſt them floating and caſt up upon every of thy coaſts?

Or to paſſe over all other, when the day of thy viſitation came, that day wherein thou for ſo long time hadſt ſo juſt cauſe of feare of my departure, and that it ſhould have beene to thee the blacke, darke and gloomie day, the day of thy miſery, the overflowing of thy land in bloud; by thouſand partakings, infinite diviſions, invaſions and over-running of ſtrangers; that day which the enemie had ſo long threatned and gloried of,

The changing of our danger into ſuch a joyfull day.

of, and for feare or hope whereof, so many had fallen unto them, by this their common and most powerfull argument; *There will come a day.* Hast thou forgotten how I made it cleane contrarily a day of thy greatest joy, triumph and securitie, that ever thine eyes had seene before?

Our unthankfulnesse in forgetting our wonderfull deliverance in bringing in our Soveraigne in such an unexpected peace.

Canst thou ever let that day slip out of thy minde, that day never to be forgotten to the end of the world; the hush that I made throughout all thy Land, not so much as a dog to wag his tongue against any of my people? How I abated all the pride and malice of the enemies in a moment, and caused every one of them to be glad to looke only unto himselfe? How without one drop of bloud shed, in such an admirable manner, and with such an unexpected sudden and joyfull triumph, I set up and established mine anointed servant in the throne of thy kingdome, without any *Interim*, still to continue and advance thy religion, thy peace and prosperitie, and to increase all thy happinesse upon thee? How I also raised thee up a new and surpassing comfort in so hopefull an off-spring, that thou shouldest never want a man to sit upon my throne, to protect and governe thee to the end of the world; all thy former feares, with all the hopes of the enemie being so cut off for ever, if thou wouldest but only at length hearken unto my voice?

His hopefull Progenie.

And to demand of thee but this one thing more: Can that day ever depart out of thy heart, when for forgetting me and my so gratious deliverances, with all these blessings and favours, and for that thou beganst to cast off my yoake more wantonly than ever thou hadst done before, and to kicke up the heele against me; I had againe almost left thee into the bloudie enemies hand, as having no more care of thee? When I seemed to have utterly forsaken thee, and to have given thee up, that thou mightest have beene destroyed at once; thy King, with all that his hopefull Progenie, which thou hadst so justly rejoyced of; thy Nobles and Rulers, both Church and Common-wealth, all to have beene wholly blowne up together? Can that Stratagem fetched forth of the bottomlesse pit; that powder furnace filled full as with the fewell of Tophet; that thy destruction without pitie, dispatched alreadie in the certaine account of the enemy, whereof the jocund meeting of the rebels, *Nimrod* and his compani-

Our miraculous deliverance from the powder furnace.

ons,

ons, will give teſtimony for ever; can theſe ever depart from before thine eyes? And above all theſe, can the freſh remembrance of this one mercie, ever any whit vaniſh or decay, how notwithſtanding all thy provocations and rebellions againſt me, I yet once againe in my wrath thus kindled againſt thee did ſtill remember mercie? How my bowels earned over thee? How I plucked thee as a brand forth of the burning? How I cauſed thy bloudie enemies themſelves, firſt to begin to diſcover their infernall device? How I ſmit an unwonted cogitation into the heart of mine Anointed (upon the reading of their letter, and on the more ſerious conſideration thereof) with a deepe ſuſpicion of ſome horrible intended treacherie, whereby to deſtroy the whole ſtate at one blow? And finally, how I ſuffered not the heart of mine Anointed ſervant to reſt, untill by meſſengers ſent to ſearch, I had brought them to the place, diſcovered all the depth of that bloudie iniquitie and horrible deſolation; and againe plucked you out of the midſt of the furnace, yea throwne in ſome of your adverſaries for you, and thus made my royall ſervant, whom I had choſen to that end, your deliverer, and the continuer of all your former hopes and comforts.

Now my people bethinke thy ſelfe well, what I have done unto thee, wherewith I have grieved thee, that thou ſhouldeſt become weary of me, and ſo deſirous to baniſh me by all thy ſinnes and provocations. That thou ſhouldeſt be ſo * forward to receive againe theſe thy bloudy enemies into thy boſome, to doat upon that ſcarlet coloured whore, whom thou knoweſt how my ſoule doth abhorre; thus vexing my Spirit, hereby to provoke me to depart away from thee, which thy enemy ſo much deſireth; to caſt thee off and to leave thee into her hand for ever? Come teſtifie againſt me! Nay my people, what could I have done more, which I have not done for thee, ſeeking and wooing thee by all meanes to winne thy firme love, and to knit thee unto me perpetually? Oh unkinde and fooliſh Nation, wilt thou needs inforce me to make thee as Iudah, and thy deſolations as Ieruſalem; to poure out my wrath upon thee, and to cauſe thy mournings and ſhame to be perpetuall, at leaſt untill thou begin to know and to ſeeke me as ever heretofore? How ſhall I give thee up, oh my people, how ſhall I deliver thee to all theſe miſeries

The Lords expoſtulation further urged, bemoaning our unkindneſſe and wilfulneſſe.

* *Having ſo many readie to receive Ieſuits and Seminaries, as all who are Popiſhly affected.*

Conſider but that which is before, and then judge whether the Lord may not juſtly thus ſpeake unto us: or but only conſider that which followeth.

Hoſea 11. 8.

ſeries which thou art drawing upon thee? How can I looke on thy ſlaine, how can I behold thy deſolations, or ſee thy teares runne downe by thy cheekes continually; the diſhonour of all thy worthies; the inſulting and vaunting of thine enemies, their ſhouting, hiſſing, gnaſhing their teeth, wagging their heads, clapping their hands, jeſting at thy Sabbaths, and all thy former religion and proſperitie? My heart is turned within me, my bowels are rowled together, to remember how neerely all this was come upon thee; and how when yet in my compaſſion I ſtill reſcued and delivered thee, looking that then ſurely thou wouldeſt have acknowledged this love, that I ſhould ſo plucke thee out of the fire, and wouldeſt have cleaved unto me for ever; that even ſtill to this inſtant, thou art rather become much deeplier ſunke in thine iniquitie, and much more deſperate, for the greateſt part, in caſting off the ſweet yoake of ſincere obedience unto my Goſpell, than ever heretofore, ſince I did in ſuch mercie vouchſafe it unto thee? How then can I any longer pitie thee, or ſpare thee? How can I any further ſuffer my long patience and mercie to be ſo abuſed, my name ſo diſhonored by thee, my juſtice ſo denied, my jealouſie ſo kindled? Oh my people, is thy heart become ſo flintie, that it cannot be mollified againe, nor relent any more? Is thy head ſo drie, that it can now ſend forth no teares at all, for all thine unkindneſſe? Art thou become ſo unnaturall, that though I have by all meanes ſo witneſſed my great unwillingneſſe to depart from thee, and to leave thee to ſo many and ſo endleſſe miſeries, and though I have beene ſo oft almoſt utterly gone, yet ever turning againe to thee in tender compaſſion, that thou canſt by no means be moved yet at length to give mee better entertainment, but rather ſeeking to expell me by multiplying thy tranſgreſſions, thereby grieving my Spirit in over-loading mee with thy ſinnes? Art thou become pitileſſe as the * Oſtriges, no longer to regard thy King and thy Nobles, thy life, peace and proſperitie, thy happineſſe in the earth; but wilfully to betray and to give up all unto the luſt of the cruell enemie, when I am once departed, and have withdrawne my protection from thee? Knoweſt thou not their rage and their furie more incenſed againſt thee, for al the foiles that I have given them, and that they muſt

* *All impenitent ſinners, eſpecially all ſcorning to be reformed, are ſuch.*
Iob 39.16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

muſt needs be much hartned in their ſeeming ſucceſſe, and increaſe of their numbers? Wilt thou not yet conſider nor lay this to heart, that that Arch-enemie of the bottomleſſe pit, who taught them from the depth of hell, to blow thee up into the aire, can have yet another as deepe, if not a deeper invention, which he cannot give over the practiſing of, untill he have effected, and that he have deſtroyed thee utterly, and that thine enemie hath ſatiate himſelfe with thy fleſh, and hath alſo gotten up into the Throne againe to tyrannize in his wonted manner, except I reſtraine him by confounding his counſels, as hitherto I have done? Wilt thou not bethinke thee, that nothing at all ſtayeth the execution hereof, but even my pitifull compaſſion and my preſence, yet in the midſt of thee, with my outſtretched hand ſtill ſuccouring and preſerving thee, to ſee if at length thou wilt humble thy ſelfe and ſo acknowledge me, giving me better entertainment? Oh that thou wouldeſt underſtand, how if yet thou couldeſt be truly humbled, meeting me with an intreatie of peace, and againe renue thy Covenant with me, ſo endevouring thy ſelfe to keepe it, and to walke before me in obedience and truth, that I likewiſe would yet once againe get my ſelfe more glory upon thine enemies, than ever I did before, and make them utterly afraid for euer riſing up againſt thee any more. Thus have we heard how the Lord may juſtly expoſtulate with us, and complaine againſt us as he did againſt Iudah, who will yet needs inforce him by our ſinnes to execute his fierce wrath upon us, as he did upon them, and how righteous it were. To the end that every one may ſee, that it is full time to begin to take a new courſe, for each to repent and turne, yea to watch and pray continually, if we will ſtill eſcape the like wofull miſeries, which hitherto we have done; and if we will move our God to take our cauſe into his owne hand, and to get himſelfe glory upon the bloudy enemie, who looketh for this day, and hath beene a principall inſtrument of all our provocations.

Micah 6. 3, 4, 5. Micah 3. 12. Ierem. 26. 17, 18, 19, 20.

But what ſay we to all this dreadfull and moſt juſt expoſtulation of the Lord with us? Wee commonly ſay ſtill, as they to whom our Saviour ſhewed what he would doe to the unthankfull husbandmen; how hee would deſtroy them, and give his vineyard to others. As they when they heard it, cried God forbid,

Our anſwer to the Lords expoſtulation and threatning. Luke 20. 16.

bid, so say we still: God forbid that he should so deale with us, as he did with Iudah, or as he hath so oft almost accomplished. And so say all Gods servants also, and crie continually unto the Lord, that he may ever forbid it, and turne it away; yea, let all who love the Lord Iesus, ever say *Amen*. Nevertheless this is not the point, but whether he have not as just cause thus to expostulate with us, and thus indeed to proceed against us, like as he threatned them in the daies of his worthiest servants *Hezekiah* and *Iosiah*? And moreover whether if he had accomplished all this upon us, as there was but a haire breadth betweene us and it; whether we must not have beene compelled to have justified him in it? Yea whether we must not still, if we looke to all the causes of such a judgement, be of necessitie much neerer unto it, and the finall and full execution of it, than ever we were before, even when the fire was kindling upon us? For as the cause is increased, so it must needs be neerer to bring forth the proper effect: As our sinne in so many is now growne up to heaven, so it must bring downe vengeance: our dreadful plagues and miseries must needs be farre more imminent and readie to rush upon us than ever heretofore. Finally, whether that terrible denunciation from the Lords owne mouth, doe not belong to us above all the people of the world at this day? And whether he doe not crie loud unto us every houre, sounding thus in our eares: *You only have I knowne of all the families of the earth: therefore I will visit you for all your iniquities.* You I have honoured and graced in a speciall manner, therefore I will surely visit you of all other. Happie therefore were it, and ten thousand times happie for us, if we could all be awaked forthwith, and every one lay our sinnes to heart, and each seeke to turne away all these evils; otherwise are we guiltie, not one but all, as we have heard, and the destruction of all may be most justly, in this respect, required at the hands of every one who seeketh not most instantly to turne it away; sith we have seene the Lord so manifestly setting the certaine perill before our faces.

The question whether God have not as just cause so to expostulate with us, as with Iudah at that time.

Amos 3. 2.

But for all you who live in any one of these abominations, which brought all this upon Iudah, whether you live in profession of prophaneness, Atheisme, Idolatry, oppression, whoredome, pride, unmercifulnesse, or in any other of those sinnes which

Application to all notorious sinners, who are the men that hale on the vengeance of the Lord.

which helped to bring the Captivitie, or in any wilfull diſobedience or breach of the Covenant, and namely in ſeeking to ſuppreſſe the power of godlineſſe, though in words you profeſſe it, you muſt know it from his Majeſty, that be you Miniſters, or be you people, you are the men; you are they that call for all theſe plagues, and hale them, yea pull them violently upon your native Countrey, and upon us all. They were your ſinnes above all, that had almoſt wrought this before, and have beene the maine cauſes of all our grievous judgements. They are your iniquities that cannot give over crying untill they have plucked all theſe upon our heads. Give me leave to ſpeake though in griefe of heart, you will be found through your ſinnes, the traitors to the Lord Ieſus, ſeeking to expell him. You are in truth, though the ſecret, yet the moſt dangerous enemies to his Anointed, to all eſtates and degrees, to all our proſperitie and happineſſe, helping to betray all theſe into the enemies hand. You crie out of all Gods poore ſervants, ſuch as *Ieremie* and theſe mourners, even againſt every one that ſeekes conſcionably to walke in his Covenant, and who will not flatter you, nor runne with you, but mourne for all your abominations: but you your ſelves are the provokers and haſtners of the vengeance, and they alone (notwithſtanding all their wants, infirmities and leſſer errours, ſlips and differences, which muſt remaine amongſt the holieſt ſervants of the Lord, whilſt we remaine here in the earth) even they have beene the ſtayers of Gods judgements, that they have not overwhelmed you.

They are unto you as *Noah* and *Lot*, whilſt that they are amongſt you, I ſpeake not for any, nor of any one, but only ſuch as in all things labour to tread in the good ſteps of *Noah*, *Lot*, *Ieremie*, and theſe mourners, who endevour to walke only according to the ſtrict rule of the Lords Covenant, in the ſubſtance whereof we all agree, and is ſet downe (ſo neere as the Lord hath enabled me) in the firſt part of this Watch: And who alſo thus ſtrive forward in true obedience to the ſupreme Majeſtie in all loyaltie to his Anointed, in love to the Church of God, and their Countries, and even to every ſoule; abiding within the boſome of the Church, and holding faſt the communion of Saints, as was ſaid before. Of them I ſpeake only, ſo farre forth as they thus

thus walke without turning from this holy Covenant of the Lord, to the right hand or to the left, and without favouring any their errors or corruptions. As it was then in Iudah, that such had beene the principall stayers of the vengeance so long, so is it now, as every one must needs confesse, who will not wilfully fight against the light. Let me therefore once againe put you all in minde, and give you all to know from the Lord, that if he doe still spare us in the riches of his mercie, at the humiliation and cries of his servants his deare and secret ones, and deferre his vengeance; (which we trust and ever begge for that he may of his infinite compassion) yet your case shall be nothing better: for let me aske of you, your owne consciences being judges; what will you doe at the day of death, which is every moment hying upon you, and now standeth at your doores? Nay what will you doe at that glorious and terrible appearing of Iesus Christ? Whither will you runne to hide you from his presence, whom you have here in the earth thus grieved, to drive him out from amongst us by your sinnes, so farre as lieth in you, and to provoke him to bring so many calamities upon his owne people and inheritance, with whom he hath dwelt so long, and would abide untill his glorious comming? How will you stop your eares, that you might not heare all your abominations laid unto your charge, and the loud cries of them all against you? And of this above all, that you who live impenitently in any of the former abominations, and chiefly you who have wallowed in many of them, have beene guiltie of the betraying and desolating the Church of the Lord and your native Countrey, so much as hath lien in you to doe, and of exposing them unto all these miseries, and into the hands of them that thirst only for their destruction? In regard of your selves it is all one whether it be done or no, you have done your parts thereunto, there is nothing wanting in you; remember *Achan*. And howsoever you escape the bloudy sword, and also famine, desolation and shame, as likewise the insulting of the cruell enemie in this world, with all the other miseries that follow a captivity; yet is there another captivitie many thousand times worse remaining for you; where the sharpe sword of Gods vengeance, even the word that you have despised, shall ever pierce thorow your

Warning to all obstinate sinners, howsoever the Lord deale with us at the cries of his servants.

Their miserable estate at death.

Most at Christs appearing.

Iſ 7. 11, 12.

your ſoules. When in ſtead of this bodily famine and thirſt, (which you may indeed be ſaved from, in the preſervation and ſafetie of Gods owne people) you ſhall after with *Dives* cry but for one drop of water to coole your tongues being tormented in the flames of hell fire, and not obtaine it. When all your jollitie and mirth ſhall be gone, all ſhall be turned into mourning, howling, and wringing of hands, with gnaſhing of teeth; when your ſorrow ſhall be ſo great, as no tongue can expreſſe; when you may cry day and night, and no eie to pittie you, nor any eare to hearken unto your wofull moane. When all the ſervants of the Lord (who have laboured to keepe his covenant) then ſhining in glory, ſhall deſpiſe and loath you for your filthineſſe: when your worme ſhall never die, your tormentors never be weary, your fire never goe forth. When finally you ſhall gnaw your tongues for ſorrow, and ſhall acknowledge the Lord to be righteous in all that he hath done, or ſhall inflict upon you. Becauſe you deſpiſed the day of mercy and grace; and becauſe you rebelled againſt that good word of the Lord; ſcorning his meſſengers and all holy meanes given unto you, to call you to amendment, and to prevent your miſeries.

Eſay 66.24.

Apoc.16.10.

Lament.1.18.

If you make any doubt hereof, inquire of any one of all thoſe who are wiſe hearted, having but the leaſt ſparke of the feare of the Lord, or of the ſaving knowledge of his word remaining in them! Inquire but of your ſoules and conſciences, once awaked out of your deepe ſecuritie, or as they have beene if ever they were thorowly awaked, looking to appeare before the Lord; whether this ſhall not be the eſtate of every impenitent ſinner: and then bethinke your ſelves, what comfort you can now poſſibly have, or ever ſhall finde untill you have unfainedly repented! If any ſhall tell you otherwiſe, and heale theſe your ſores with ſweet words, though he were an Angell from heaven, hold him accurſed, he is but the tongue of the ſerpent to harden you to perdition, and to cauſe you ſtill to helpe to bring upon us all theſe evils mentioned.

How each may come to the certaine knowledge of the truth hereof, *viz.* by inquiring of his own heart awaked.

Thus much for the miſeries of a temporall captivitie due for the ſinnes of Gods people, and alſo for the eternall puniſhment and miſery remaining for all impenitent ſinners, howſoever through the company of the Lords ſervants, and the infinite riches

riches of his mercy, they may eſcape the temporall judgement here. And what juſt cauſe every one hath to watch and to pray, yea to weep and cry out unto the Lord day and night, and never give him over, untill the feare of all theſe evils be turned away.

CHAP. XIV.

How Gods true meſſengers and all his faithfull ſervants are wont to be affected, when they feare upon juſt grounds his anger to be kindled and his judgement ready to ruſh upon his people. Alſo the meanes which they uſe in this their holy affection to prevent the evils, and to appeaſe the wrath. And herein likewiſe what cauſe we have to watch and pray for want of theſe affections, and for the generall neglect of the ſtate of the people, and of pacifying of his Majeſtie.

VERSE 8. *And it came to paſſe while they were ſlaying them, and I was left, that I fell upon my face, and cried and ſaid: Ah Lord God, wilt thou deſtroy all the reſidue of Iſrael, in powring out of thy fury upon Ieruſalem?*

How Ezekiel was affected with this terrible viſion in commiſeration towards this people.

IN theſe words the Holy Ghoſt declareth how the Prophet was moved with this viſion, and how his heart was affected for the ſtate of the people, and the miſeries to come upon them. How he fals downe upon his face before the Lord, cries unto him for them, and after a ſort expoſtulates with his Majeſtie; whether he would deſtroy the reſidue of Iſrael, and not leave himſelfe a Church upon the earth. Seeing that he had formerly cauſed the ten tribes to be carried away captive, and had conſumed many of them, and alſo had carried away many of Iudah, ſome into Egypt, others into Babylon, and deſtroied very many others, whether he would now powre out his wrath upon Ieruſalem alſo, that ſmall remainder of his poore people there. Eſpecially conſidering that Ieruſalem was the place where he had promiſed to have his Church: and for that hereby he ſhould not leave himſelfe a Church or people upon the earth: which appeared contrary to all his promiſes made

unto

unto Ieruſalem, and chiefly unto that particular promiſe made unto his Church, that it ſhould remaine as long as the Sunne and Moone endured. And herein the Prophet ſeemeth thus to pleed with the Lord. *Pſal.89.36,37, 38.*

Thou ſeeſt, oh Lord, that theſe are now but a poore remainder of all thy people, and wilt thou deſtroy them alſo? Are not theſe as thy only inheritance now? wilt thou not leave thy ſelfe a Church upon the earth, contrary to all thy promiſes, nor a people to ſerve thee? Is not this Ieruſalem thine owne citie, choſen and beloved of thee above all the places of the earth, that place where thou haſt ſaid, that thy name and glory ſhould dwell for ever, and wilt thou notwithſtanding now diſanull all this in powring out thy wrath upon it? Thus beſides all his paines in preaching to them to warne them, and uſing all poſſible meanes to ſave them from Gods vengeance, he addeth moreover this importunate interceſſion, never giving the Lord over in this his earneſt ſuit, whilſt there was any hope left at all. *The manner of the Prophets pleading with the Lord.*

In which worthy enſample the Lord would have all men to behold how all his true ſervants, and namely his faithfull meſſengers are affected, when they ſee by evident ſignes and tokens that the Lords anger is kindled againſt his people for their ſins. How when they perceive ſome fearefull judgement ready to come upon them, that they are not then ſenſleſſe, though themſelves ſhould eſcape; neither doe they rejoyce for the vengeance to come upon their enemies, becauſe of all the hatred, wrongs and injuries which the wicked have done unto them, but contrarily they fall upon their faces before the Lord for them, and uſe all the waies that ever they can have any hope of, even all the meanes which the Lord makes knowne unto them, how to appeaſe his Majeſtie, and ſo to ſave his people. *How Gods faithfull ſervants are affected, ſeeing his anger kindled againſt his people. How they uſe all meanes to pacifie him.*

How they have beene wont to mourne and to be troubled in ſeeing the abominations amongſt the people, we have heard before in ſundry examples. For the meanes which they, chiefly the Prophets, have beene wont to uſe both to pacifie the Lord and to preſerve his people, they are theſe principally which follow, and may be brought to theſe heads. *The meanes which they have beene wont to uſe to this end.*

They have beene ſuch as either have concerned { The Lord alone. / His people.

Thoſe

Those concerning the Lord alone, are Prayer and intercession for the people.

Meanes concerning the people are
- Warning them aforehand of Gods anger for their sinnes.
- Directing them what to doe to pacifie the Lords wrath.
- Comforting the godly against whatsoever come to passe.

1. They have fore-warned them by setting before their faces,
   1. The covenant which they had entred into with the Lord, with his mercies towards them, and also his holinesse and jealousie.
   2. Their grievous sins contrary to that covenant.
   3. The vengeance of the Lord prepared for them, unlesse they repented speedily.

2. They have directed them
   - How to seeke to pacifie the Lord by
     1. Humbling themselves {Publikely, Privately.}
     2. Searching out and confessing the maine sins angring the Lord.
     3. Using all holy endevour to take away all the abominations provoking him.
   - How to keepe the Lords favour after he is pacified, by
     1. Taking away the principall causes of the sinnes, that the people turne not to them againe.
     2. Establishing every where and preserving the chiefe meanes of all holy obedience, that is, faithfull {Magistrates, Ministers.}

3. They have comforted all the godly, with the Lords sweet promises against whatsoever could come to passe.

Gods faithfull servants have beene wont to intreat the Lord in secret to pacifie him towards his people, as *Abraham.*

For the first meanes which concernes the Lord alone, to wit, praier and intercession to pacifie his majestie: How the true servants of God have praied and striven with him in secret when they have seene his vengeance towards any, we have the ensam-

ple

ple of *Abraham*, how instant he is even for the wicked Sodomites, and how he will not give the Lord over: upon which vehement importuning him, he would have spared them all, had there beene but ten righteous in all those five cities, but even two in a citie. And puls out *Lot* from the destruction, remembring his servant *Abraham* and his intercession. *Gen.18.22,to 32.* *Gen.19.29.*

Secondly, we have the like ensample of *Moses* oftentimes, how he fals upon his face ordinarily, in all the hainous provocations of the people; how he crieth unto the Lord: how he contends with him, urging him in regard of his owne great name and glory, his mercies, promises, with the blasphemies and insulting of his enemies. How he in the fervencie of his zeale intreateth the Lord rather to raze his name out of his booke, than that he should not pardon their sinne! And how he continueth in his humiliation for them, to appease the Lord, for fortie daies together; becaus the Lord had said he would destroy them. *Moses.* *Deut.9.25,26, 27,28,29.* *Exod.32.31.* *Deut.9.18.25.*

The like we may see in *Samuel*; who as the people in their extremities run to him, intreating that he should not cease to crie unto the Lord for them; so he notwithstanding all their wrongs and casting him off, saith, *God forbid that I should sinne against the Lord, and cease praying for you.* Where the holy Prophet accounts it his sinne, if he should for any of their injuries against himselfe, give over intreating the Lord for them. *Samuel.* *1 Sam.7.8.* *1 Sam.12.19.*

The Prophet *Ieremy* also wishing *his head full of water, and his eies a fountaine of teares to weepe for the obstinate people continually*, praieth for them so long untill *the Lord forbid him to pray for them* any more to doe them good, and also untill he tell him, that though *Noah, Iob, and Daniel were amongst them, they should but save their owne soules:* for that his heart could not be towards them. This the holy Prophet did notwithstanding all their maliciousnesse against him. So did our blessed Saviour, and after him holy *Paul.* Although this indeed did drive the good Prophet *Ieremy* into wonderfull passion, That they should dig a pit for his soule, that had continually stood before the Lord to speake good for them, and to turne away the wrath from them. And thus much of the first meanes, that is, of the praiers and intercessions of Gods deare servants to pacifie the Lord towards his people, wherein they have ever beene as *Aaron*, *Ieremy.* *Ier.9.1.11.14.* *Jer.15.1.* Our Saviour and *Paul.* *Ier.15.10.* These have beene as *Aaron* running to make an attonement.

Aaron, running to make an attonement with their incenſe, and ſtanding betweene the living and the dead, and ſo ſtaying the plagues. And as *Moſes* ſtanding up in the breach, and holding the Lords hands, yea pacifying his anger, that it ſhould not wax hot againſt his people.

*Num.*16.47, 48. *Exod.*32.10. *Pſal.*106.28. And as *Moſes* in the breach.

Secondly, as they have not ceaſed to crie unto the Lord, ſo they have not beene wanting in their places and callings, to ſhew the people of their ſinnes, and to forewarne them of the vengeance comming upon them. They have uſed herein to be as *Noah*, labouring by their preaching, and all manner of admonitions and warnings, to prepare an Arke for their owne ſafetie, and of ſo many as they could get into it. They have alſo ſtriven to bring every one to whom they have beene ſent into this Arke, by bringing them to unfained repentance; and that they have done ſo long, as the great patience of God abid, to ſee whom they could poſſibly ſave from that wrath to come. They have beene as *Lot*, warning his kinſmen of the vengeance at hand; and as the Angels to *Lot*, uſing all meanes to get him and his out of the deſtruction; and haling them out by violence out of the burning. As *Moſes* at the golden Calfe, both ſetting before the faces of the people, the horror of their ſinne, and endevouring by all meanes to cauſe them to deteſt it; and doing whatſoever might be to ſtay and appeaſe the Lords fury kindled; and by declaring the approaching of the judgement, to cauſe everie one to ſeeke to eſcape for his life: at leaſtwiſe to make them to crie loud unto him for pardon. Thus did *Samuel*, when the people had angred the Lord by caſting him off, and would needs have a King, and be like other nations; he tels them the hainouſneſſe of their ſinne, and the eviſs which they brought upon their owne heads thereby, to make them ſo to cry out unto him for mercie.

2. They have beene wont to forewarne Gods people of their ſinnes, and his vengeance comming on them for the ſame, as *Noah*.

Eſay 58.1. *Gen.*7.1. *Heb.*11.17. 1 *Pet.*3.20.

Lot.

Angels to *Lot.* *Gen.*19.12, 13, 14.

Moſes. *Exod.*32.19, 20.

*Gen.*19.17.

Samuel. 1 *Sam.*12.10.

Thus did all the Prophets, chiefly thoſe who lived before this Captivitie, and eſpecially *Ieremy* and *Ezechiel*. It is almoſt all their whole worke in diſcovering the ſinnes of the people, with the plagues and miſeries which were at hand, and calling them to the Covenant to repentance and to obedience, to trie if yet at length they could make them to returne, and to ſeeke to prevent the wrath. This is the very laſt of all the meanes which

All the Prophets before this Captivitie.

which the Lord bids *Ieremy* to use, after all crying to them by his preaching, yet to warne them by writing, (when he could no longer speak to them being shut up, that he could not goe to the house of God:) thereby yet more plainly to shew their sin, and whatsoever God had spoken against them. To trie if so at length by this meanes, they would be brought to pray before the Lord, and everie one returne from his evill way, that yet they might be delivered and escape all their miseries. Thus finally did *Iohn Baptist* in his ministerie before their last desolation. Thus our Saviour himselfe; and so all who have beene faithfull unto the Lord.

Ieremy by writing when he could not speake.
Ier. 36.1,2,3,6,7.

Matth. 3.7.
Iohn.
Matth. 23.13,14 35,36,37.
Our Saviour.

The reason hereof is most evident, even in this respect chiefly, because God hath made them his watchmen to this very end, to foresee the plagues comming upon the people for their sinnes; and withall to descrie the particular iniquities, for which the vengeance is comming, and to give his people warning thereof. Because the Lord would not destroy his people, if any other meanes might serve to reclaime them; or if there could be any other remedie. Yea our Saviour hath set these in his owne place, to be Ambassadors for him and in his stead, to seeke to reconcile and to save all from his fathers wrath. He hath committed unto them the charge of the whole congregation; and they must give an account for everie soule. And therefore the bloud of Gods people must be required at their hands if they faile in this dutie. Reade but the third Chapter of *Ezekiel*, and the 33. for these two chapters being written as of purpose to that end, are able to satisfie any, who beleeve the word of the Lord. And thus much of the second meanes which Gods faithfull messengers are wont to use to pacifie the Lord towards his people, by causing them to see their sinnes, and Gods vengeance comming upon them.

Reason.
Ezek. 3.17,18. 33.6.8.
They are the Lords watchmen to this end chiefly to give them warning and save them.
2. Ambassadors to reconcile them.
Num. 3.7.
Heb. 13.17.
2 *Cor.* 5.20.
Ezek. 3.18.

The third meanes which they have used in their tender affection, hath beene by directing Gods people to the meanes ordained to asswage the wrath and to escape the vengeance. The principall of which is by humbling themselves before the Lord for all their transgressions, to acknowledge thereby their unworthinesse of any mercie, and how they have indeed deserved the righteous vengeance of the Lord, even whatsoever

3. Gods servants have beene wont to direct his people to the meanes whereby he may be pacified.
1 *Chron.* 7.12, 13,14

The principall meanes publike humiliations.
Ioel. 2. 12, 13, 14, 15.

By acknowledging their unworthineſſe, begging pardon.
Lev. 23. 27, 28.

ever he had threatned. This is the way by humbling the ſoule of every man to make an attonement and reconciliation for all. This the holy Ghoſt hath noted of purpoſe in divers places, where the anger of the Lord is ſaid to have beene kindled againſt his people, this hath beene ordinarily the meanes to pacifie it. I will ſet downe ſome of the places, that we may ſee the evidence hereof.

1. When the Lord would have deſtroied them for the golden Calfe.
Exod. 33. 4, 5.

Firſt, when the Lord was angrie with them for the golden Calfe, he bids *Moſes* thus to ſay unto them: *Yee are a ſtiffe necked people, I will come ſuddenly upon thee and conſume thee. Therefore now put thy coſtly raiment from thee, that I may know what to doe unto thee.* Wherein the meaning of the Lord was, that they ſhould humble themſelves in faſting, weeping and mourning, putting off their coſtly raiment (as was uſuall at their faſts) both to declare how they were unworthy of raiment, food or life, or any of Gods mercies; and alſo to increaſe thereby their ſorrow for their ſinne; to the end that the Lord ſeeing their unfained repentance, might ſhew them mercy. Thus the holy Ghoſt ſaith, that at this time they ſorrowed, and no man put on his beſt raiment, and God ſpared them.
Exod. 33. 4, 5, 6.

2 In the overthrow of Iſrael by the Benjamites.
Iudg. 20. 12, 13, 14.

Thus did they alſo in the daies of the Iudges, when they ſaw the anger of the Lord evidently, that all Iſrael were not able to ſtand before that one tribe of *Benjamin*, no not in ſo good a cauſe as execution of juſtice, upon the wicked men of Gibea, for ſo horrible a fact, as that beaſtly ſinne committed againſt the Levites wife, that thereby they might put away evil from Iſrael. Then it is ſaid, That all the children of Iſrael went up, and all the people came to the houſe of God, and wept and ſate there before the Lord, and faſted that day untill the evening, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings, and ſo the Lord was pacified towards them, and gave them the victorie againſt thoſe wicked men.
Iud. 20. 26.

3 In the terrible plague in the daies of *David* for numbring the people.
1 *Chron.* 21. 7. *Verſ.* 14.

So in the daies of *David*, when Gods anger was ſo manifeſtly kindled againſt the people (for *Davids* numbring of them in the pride of his heart) that they died of the peſtilence moſt fearfully, even ſeventie thouſand in three daies: At that time when the deſtroying Angell ſtretched out his hand againſt Ieruſalem, the Holy Ghoſt ſetteth it downe for a preſident to all poſteritie, that

that King *David* himselfe and the Elders of Israel were clothed in sack-cloth, being humbled publikely in fasting and mourning. And then the holy Ghost saith, that even as they were thus humbling themselves, *David* lift up his eyes and saw the Angell of the Lord standing betweene the earth and the heaven, and the sword drawne in his hand stretched out against Ierusalem. At which they all fell upon their faces, and *David* confessed and said unto the Lord; *Is it not I that commanded to number the people? Is it not even I, that have sinned and committed evill? But these sheepe what have they done? Oh Lord I beseech thee let thy hand be on me and on my fathers house, but not on thy people for their destruction.* At which humiliation of the King himselfe and the Elders, and that lowly confession of *David*, taking all the sinne unto himselfe, the Lord directs them what to doe, to set up an Altar, and there to sacrifice and call on the name of the Lord: which so soone as they had performed, his anger was pacified, and the Angell put up his sword againe.

1 *Chron.* 21. 16.

Vers. 17.

1 *Chron.* 21. 18. 26, 27.

Also in the daies of that good King *Iehosophat*, when such armies of enemies of sundrie countries came against him, both of the Moabites, Ammonites, and of Mount Seir, that there was no strength in him and in his people to stand against that huge multitude, he sets himselfe to seeke the Lord, as his only refuge now, and immediatly proclaimes a Fast thorowout all Iudah. So that the Historie saith, *that all Iudah was gathered*, meaning very many of all sorts, *and stood before the Lord, with their young ones, their wives and their children.* All were gathered to aske counsell and to enquire of the Lord, concerning their sinnes, and what he would have them to doe, and so to make confession of their sinnes, and to seeke his face and helpe. Wherein when the worthy King had himselfe made a singular confession, and prayer, importuning the Lord by his mercies and his speciall promises to heare them crying unto him in their tribulation; and moreover having acknowledged that there was no strength in them to stand against that great multitude, neither knew they what to doe, but their eyes were only towards him, he immediatly raised up a Prophet, upon whom came the Spirit, in the midst of the Congregation; by whom hee speakes thus

4 In *Iehosophats* dayes when he heard of the huge armies of enemies comming against his people.

2 *Chro.* 20. 3. 12.

This example is to be beholden of all religious rulers, who would see the like experience of the Lords presence and mercie, and therefore set downe at large.

Verse 4.
Verse 5.
Vers. 6.
Verse 9.
Vers. 12.
Verse 13.
Vers. 14.

Verſ. 15. thus comfortably to them: *Harken yee all Iudah, and yee inhabitants of Ieruſalem, and thou King Iehoſophat. Thus ſaith the Lord unto you, feare yee not, neither be afraid for this great multitude: for the battell is not yours, but Gods, ye ſhall not need to fight in this battell, ſtand ſtill, move not, and behold the ſalvation of the Lord towards you. Oh Iudah and Ieruſalem feare yee not, neither be afraid, to morow goe out againſt them, and the Lord will be with you.* Verſ. 17. Verſ. 18. *Then Iehoſophat bowed downe with his face towards the earth, and all the people fell downe before the Lord,* worſhipping him for that gratious preſence and comfortable anſwer. *The Levites alſo* Verſ. 19. beleeving the word, *praiſed the Lord.* And then withall that worthie King to incourage the people in like manner, ſtands up a- Verſ. 20. gaine, and thus ſpeakes unto them: *Heare yee me oh Iudah, and yee inhabitants of Ieruſalem, put your truſt in the Lord your God, and yee ſhall be aſſured, beleeve his Prophets, and yee ſhall proſper.* After which the holy Ghoſt hath recorded, that they having appointed ſingers according to the Commandement of the Lord, which ſhould goe before the men of armes, and ſhould ſing; Verſ. 22. *Praiſe yee the Lord, for his mercie endureth for ever, when they began to ſhout and to praiſe the name of the Lord, the Lord laid ambuſhments againſt the enemies, that they ſlue one another,* Verſ. 23. *untill they were all fallen to the earth, and none eſcaped:* That they needed not to fight, but only to magnifie the holy and mightie God, who had fought en for them; and who had moreover brought ſuch abundance of riches unto them, that they were three daies in gathering the ſpoile; and that they had ſo much ſubſtance and other pretious jewels, untill they could carrie no more. So they bleſſed the Lord, and called the place where they praiſed him, *The valley of bleſſing,* for the Lord had made them to rejoyce. *Then they returned to Ieruſalem with joy, with Viols, Harps and Trumpets, even to the houſe of the Lord; from whence they had come forth mourning firſt, now they bring their ſheaves with joy.* Moreover the holy Ghoſt hath recorded it, to provoke all to this dutie of religious faſting; *That the feare of the Lord fell upon all the kingdomes of the earth, when they heard that the Lord had fought againſt the enemies of Iſrael. So the kingdome of Iehoſophat was quiet, and his God gave him reſt on every ſide.* And this was the happie fruit of that moſt religious and holy Faſt of

Verſ. 24.
Verſ. 25.
Verſ. 26.
Verſ. 27.
Verſ. 28.
Pſal. 126. 6.

Here is the way to overthrow and daunt the enemies of the Church for ever.

Verſ. 29.
Verſ. 30.

of renowned *Iehosophat*, which I have set downe more at large, like as the Lord hath to that end caused it to be so amplie set out in the Historie, to encourage all worthy Rulers and people to the imitation hereof, in every such perill, or token of Gods wrath, or for the insulting of the proud and cruell enemies of the Church.

Thus likewise against that bloudie decree procured by cursed *Haman* to destroy all the people of God in one day, *Queene Hester commandeth Mordocay, To goe and to assemble all the Iewes that were found in Shushan and to fast for her, and neither to eat nor drinke in three daies, day nor night, shee also and her maids would fast likewise, and so shee would goe unto the King, which was not according to the Law, and if shee perished shee perished.* Now who knoweth not what a gratious successe the Lord gave to Queene *Hester* hereupon in her suit unto the King, and what a blessing followed upon all their fasting and weeping, even in all the Provinces where they were; in reversing of that bloudie decree, the overthrow of their cruell enemies and designes, and turning all upon their owne heads; and also in hanging that proud *Haman* upon the gallowes, which he himselfe had prepared to be set up for *Mordocay*. And finally, in the joyfull day that came unto all the Lords poore people, a day ever after solemnly kept by them for a thankfull day in memory thereof.

5 In the daies of *Hester* against the bloudie decree of *Haman*. *Hester* 4. 6.

To omit those Fasts in the daies of *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*, when the people sate trembling before the Lord for the horrible sins that were committed, and for that great raine; as also to passe over that of *Iosuah*, when for the sinne of *Achan* Gods people were not able to stand before their enemies, but were chased by the men of Ai, even by a handfull as it were; contrary to all the promises made unto them and unto *Iosuah* specially. How *Iosuah* and the Elders of Israel fell to the earth upon their faces before the Arke unto the eventide, putting dust upon their heads. And how upon their humiliation, the Lord made the sinne knowne unto them, for which his anger was kindled; upon the finding out and punishing whereof his anger was appeased, and he gave them most glorious victories over their enemies after.

Nehem. 9. 1. *Ezra* 10. 9.

6 In the daies of *Iosuah* for *Achans* sinne.

To leave all these, and to conclude with that of the Ninivites, which to all who feare the Lord may be in stead of all ensamples:

7 The ensample of the Ni-

nivites in ſtead of all other, to all poſteritie. *Jon.* 3.

who, (when they heard the vengeance of the Lord denounced againſt them by *Ionah*, though he was a poore ſtranger to them, and they Heathens without the knowledge of the true God, yea moreover a rich, hautie and ſecure people, yet, hearing him crie up and downe Ninivie, *Yet fortie daies and Ninivie ſhall be overthrowne*, and telling them that their wickedneſſe was come before the Lord, and therefore unleſſe they repented within that time they ſhould be deſtroyed; knowing their iniquitie to be accordingly as he cried out againſt them, and that they therefore had deſerved this vengeance) they I ſay *beleeved God, and proclaimed a Faſt, putting on ſack-cloth, from the greateſt to the leaſt, for word came to the King of Ninivie, and he aroſe from his Throne, and laid his robe from him, and covered himſelfe with ſack-cloth, and ſate in aſhes. And he cauſed a proclamation thorow Ninivie, that neither man nor beaſt ſhould taſte any thing, neither feed nor drinke water, but that all ſhould put on ſack-cloth and crie mightily unto God, and every man turne from his evill way, and from the wickedneſſe that was in their hands; for who could tell, if God would turne and repent, turning from his fierce wrath, that they periſhednot?* So the holy Ghoſt ſaith, *that the Lord ſaw their workes, that they turned from their evill waies, and he repented him of the evill, that he had ſaid that he would doe unto them, and did it not.*

Jon. 3. *Verſe* 5. 6.

Verſe 7.

Verſe 8.

Verſ. 9.

Thus we ſee in this cloud of glorious teſtimonies, that the prime meanes to pacifie the Lords anger, when it is kindled againſt his people, is and hath beene ever the humbling of all ſorts before his heavenly Majeſtie in prayer and faſting, and how the Prophets have called hereunto. And unto this the Church of God in this our owne Nation hath borne moſt ſufficient and happie teſtimonie in the yeere eightie eight, and many other times, when we have had this left as our only refuge, to flie unto God in this manner. And finally, the Lord himſelfe hath verified this before our eyes, in the happie iſſues and bleſſings which he hath given hereby, as we ſhall ſee more after.

8 Our owne practiſe and experience.

The reaſon hereof is alſo moſt evident: Becauſe Gods anger being kindled againſt all, and for the ſins of all his people, how ſhould he be pacified, but by an attonement made by all? And how can that be, but by a generall humiliation of all in acknowledgement

The reaſon hereof.

ledgement of their ſinne and deſert, crying for mercie, and offering themſelves in all humility to yeeld obedience unto him for ever after, to walke in his Covenant as his owne people. This was the cauſe that under the Law there was appointed a ſet day every yeere, to wit, the tenth of the ſeventh moneth, to make a reconciliation and an attonement with God for all the ſinnes and provocations of the people, which were committed and renued yeerely, to the end that he ſhould not deſtroy them. And that perſon which did not humble himſelfe this day, the Lord threatned to cut him off from among the people. And on the other ſide, they ſo humbling themſelves generally, the Lord ordained that the Prieſts ſhould make an attonement to cleanſe them from their ſinnes: all their ſinnes ſhould be pardoned. This was appointed to be a perpetuall ordinance unto them, to make an attonement for all their ſinnes once in the yeere. And ſo they did. Now although the ceremonie of the certaine time be abrogated, and whatſoever elſe in that ordinance was meerely ceremoniall, yet the morall part and the equitie of it is perpetuall, as namely this; that the Lords anger being kindled againſt all his people for their ſinnes, muſt be appeaſed towards all, and that by a generall reconciliation of the Lord unto his people, and againe of the people unto the Lord. This was and is to be made by a generall humbling of all the people, even of every ſoule, as every ſoule hath ſinned, and by the offering of every one, to walke in obedience unto the Lord. And then the Lords Miniſters making an attonement by their inſtant ſupplications and interceſſions through the bloud of Chriſt, the Lord will be pacified towards his people.

All having provoked the Lord, all muſt pacifie him by humbling themſelves. *Levit.* 23. 27. to 32. According to the yeerely ordinance. *Levit.* 16. 30. *Levit.* 23. 30. *Levit.* 23. 29.

So the people in *Michaes* time pretending that they would doe any thing to pacifie the Lord towards them, if it were to offer thouſands of Rammes, or the fruit of their bodies, [their children which were as deare unto them as their very lives] for the ſinne of their ſoules. The Prophet tels them how they might appeaſe his wrath, and be reconciled unto him, in theſe words: *He hath ſhewed thee* (ſaith he) *oh man what is good, and what he requireth of thee; ſurely to doe juſtly, and to love mercy, to humble thy ſelfe, and to walke with thy God.* Where the chiefe meanes, and as it were the ſumme of all how to pacifie the Lord is this:

Micah 6. 6. *Verſ.* 7. *Verſ.* 8.

for men to humble themſelves, for thoſe things wherein they have offended, and to offer themſelves to walke ever after lowly with their God, in obedience to all his Commandements. And hitherto of the meanes to appeaſe the Lords diſpleaſure: which muſt needs be ſo in all reaſon; for if a man who hath but the leaſt drop of mercie, may be pacified hereby, though never ſoundly before, how much more then the great and holy God, who is mercie and compaſſion it ſelfe, will certainly be reconciled by it, when he ſeeth the humiliation to be ſincere, and from an unfained purpoſe and reſolution of amendment?

The office of forewarning and calling hereunto, belongs to Gods Miniſters.

As this is moſt cleare to be the principall meanes, ſo this office of directing and calling all Gods people hereunto, at ſuch times when his anger is kindled againſt them, belongs chiefly to his meſſengers the Prophets, and all who ſucceed them to the end of the world: for as they are both to manifeſt Gods wrath and vengeance before it come, and alſo to declare the ſinnes for which he is ſo provoked, ſo they are to call upon all to ſeeke to appeaſe the Lord, and to direct them to thoſe meanes which he hath ordained and ſanctified to this end, whereof this generall humbling is a principall.

The ſupreme Magiſtrate to appoint publike Faſts, and to ſee them practiſed.

The ſupreme Magiſtrate is to appoint and enjoyne this to all his people, and by inferiour Magiſtrates his deputies, to ſee the execution and practiſe of it, by all from the higheſt to the loweſt, and to give them an enſample herein. Becauſe they are the chiefe Fathers, Paſtors, and Watch-men of Gods people, and of all other, to be accountable for all in generall, as he hath committed all his people to them unto that end. Thus did *Ioſuah*, *David*, *Iehoſophat*, Queene *Heſter*, the King of Ninivie, where the holy Ghoſt hath regiſtred it, that all was done by the counſell of the King and his Nobles. But the Lords meſſengers who are his Watchmen both for Prince and people, being appointed to ſtand upon their Watch-towers continually, to deſcrie and give warning of the enemie approching; and in the Lords counſell, and alſo to be the Lords mouth to all, they are to call upon the Magiſtrate, and upon all the people for meeting the Lord at ſuch times. They are likewiſe to direct all according to his word, how he may be pacified and his people ſaved, and to doe what poſſibly they can by crying unto them to move all here-

Ioſ. 8. 13.
1 *Chron.* 21. 16.
2 *Chron.* 20. 3.
Heſter 4. 16.
Ion. 3. 7.
Ezek. 3. 17.

The Miniſters to forewarne and call upon the Magiſtrate to this end, and to warne all the people.

Ezek. 33. 2, 3, 4. to 8.

hereunto. Otherwise the bloud of all the people must be required at their hands. As they must shew all the counsell of God to every soule particularly, so much more to all the people joyntly, lest his wrath breake forth upon them.

If when the Lord speakes but to one wicked man, that he shall die the death, and his Messenger doe not admonish that wicked man of his wicked way, that wicked man must not only die in his iniquitie, but his bloud must be required also at the messengers hand; how much more then when it concerneth a whole Nation, being the people and Church of God, which is so deare and pretious unto him? When the sins of Gods people shall be growne to that height, that all may see by the hainousnesse of them, and by other infallible signes, that his anger is so kindled against them, that without speedie repentance and meeting his Majestie, it cannot be, but that his vengeance must needs come in some terrible manner: how can the Messengers escape, if they lift not up their voyces as trumpets, crying unto them to awake and give them warning?

Ierem. 23 22.
Malac. 2. 7.
Lament. 2. 14.
Zeph. 2. 1, 2.
Micah. 6. 8.
Otherwise the bloud of every soule must be required at their hands.
Acts 20. 19, 20.
Ezek. 33. 8.

Thus have the Prophets done by the Lords immediate commandement, like as he bade *Moses* thus to direct his people when his anger was hot against them, and he was now readie to consume them; *that they should put off their costly rayment, that so he might know what to doe unto them.* Thus did the Prophet *Ioel* likewise, and that againe and againe. First for a dreadfull dearth, threatned to all the Land by an extreme drought; whereupon he speakes thus to them: *Gird your selves and lament yee Priests: howle ye Ministers of the Altar: come and lie all night in sack-cloth, ye Ministers of my God; for the meat offering and the drinke offering are taken away from the house of your God. Sanctifie a Fast, call a solemne assembly: gather the Elders and all the Inhabitants of the Land, into the house of the Lord your God, and cry unto the Lord, Alas for the day, the day of the Lord is at hand, and it commeth as a destruction from the Almighty.* Secondly, he having foretold them of the terrible day that was comming, and asking who could stand [because of the Lords mighty armies comming against them, which they were not able to withstand] he cals them to *turne to the Lord with fasting, weeping, and mourning. To sanctifie and call a solemne assembly; to sanctifie the Congregation,*

Thus have the Prophets done by the Lords immediate commandement, as *Moses.*
Exod. 33. 5.
Ioel.
Joel 2. 3.
13. 14.

Ioel 2. 11, 12, 13.

Ioel 2. 14, 15, 16, 17.

gation, even all ſorts little and great, and to humble themſelves in faſting and prayer; the very Bride and the Bridegroome. Yea, the Prieſts the Miniſters of the Lord, to weepe betweene the Porch and the Altar, and to ſay, Spare thy people oh Lord, and give not thy heritage unto reproach, that the Heathen ſhould rule over them. Wherefore ſhould they ſay among the people, where is their God? Then will the Lord be jealous over his Land, and ſpare his people. So that whether the Lord threaten by famine, by multiplying the enemies of his Church, or any other deſtruction, that very threatning is his call to faſting and mourning. *Zephany* in like manner having denounced feareſull threatnings from the Lord againſt Iudah and Ieruſalem for all their abominations, cals them in like manner to meet the Lord, ſaying thus unto them: *Gather your ſelves, even gather you, oh Nation not worthy to be beloved, before the decree come forth, and before the day of the Lord come upon you.* And after ſpeaking particularly to all who unfainedly feared God, ſaith, *Seeke yee the Lord all the meeke of the Earth.* Now how ſhould a people gather themſelves to prevent the execution of the Lords decree, before it come forth, *viz.* before the execution of the vengeance decreed, but only by ſuch a humiliation, as we ſee the practiſe of, cleane thorow the booke of God?

Joel 1. 14. 15.

Zephany.

Zephany 1.

Zephany 2. 1.

Verſ. 2.

Verſ. 3.

A generall preſident for all poſteritie.

Eſay 22. 12. The Lord then cals to faſting when his vengeance is comming, for the abominations increaſed.

His callers are his meſſengers.

Watchmen. *Ezek.* 3. 33.

Paſtors. *Eſay* 62. 6.

As the way is for one particular man, ſo is it for a whole Nation, when all have ſinned, or all are threatned alike. This one preſident following, muſt needs ſtand firme for all. The Prophet *Eſay* having denounced this deſtruction unto Ieruſalem, for all their horrible ſinnes, ſaith, *That in that day the Lord called unto weeping, mourning, and girding with ſack-cloth:* that is, to faſting and humiliation. In what day was that when hee ſo called? Even when their ſinnes were growne moſt hainous, and therefore he had proclaimed vengeance againſt them, when it was moſt evident that his wrath muſt needs burne. And by whom doth he then call thus in his Church, but by his Prophets and meſſengers? They alone are his callers, crying to all to repent, as *Iohn* the Baptiſt did, and calling alſo to all the meanes thereof. They are his watchmen upon his wals, his centinels to ring the Alarum-bell. They are his ſpirituall Paſtors to preſerve his flocke. At their hands will the Lord in a moſt

ſpeciall

speciall manner require his sheepe; if they doe not thus warne and direct how to save his flocke. As also at the hands of the rulers the chiefe watchmen, if they performe not whatsoever his messengers doe rightly warne in his name, and if they compell not the people thereunto so much as they are able. But principally at the hands of the Ministers. They must beare the iniquitie of the Sanctuarie, the iniquitie of their office; for they are chosen and called forth to be betweene the Lord and his people, that his wrath doe not come upon them. And for this cause is it why they have their maintenance of all the Lords people, because they are to be for every one, to warne and to save all from his wrath so much as lieth in them.

Num 18.1.5. 21,22,23.

Secondly, as they are to be in Gods place to call his people to humble themselves before him, and to meet him with intreatie of peace, so also are they to doe their uttermost endevour, that this their humiliation may be sound and unfained, to worke in all sorts a true and lively repentance; whereby to reconcile and wholly pacifie the Lord; even to make a full attonement. And to this end they are bound to set before the faces of all, the meanes which the Lords people have used, and are commended in his booke, to testifie and also to increase this unfained sorrow and repentance for sinne, and to asswage Gods displeasure. For if these generall humiliations be performed hypocritically, then in stead of appeasing the wrath, they increase the sinne much more, and therewithall the vengeance of God; and doe also farre more harden all sorts, and so prepare and fit them much sooner for destruction. How such fained humiliations will harden men in an opinion that God is well enough pleased and pacified by them; yea that he is bound unto them, for their so fasting and mourning, and therefore they will rest themselves therein without any further turning unto him, and even to murmure against him, if he doe not heare them according to their desires, we may plainly see in the Prophet *Esay*; where the people thus deceiving themselves, and doating upon their counterfeit fasts, doe expostulate with the Lord after this manner; saying, *Wherefore have we fasted and thou seest us not? we have punished our selves, and thou regardest us not. Behold, saith the Lord, in the day of your fasts you will seeke your will, and require*

2.
Gods Ministers are to labour that the humiliation of the people may be unfained and availeable. To set before their faces the meanes hereof.

Fasts performed hypocritically, more increase the vengeance.

They cause men to rest therein without true repentance, and to murmure against God, if he heare them not.

Esay 58.3. Nature of hypocriticall fasting. *Vers.* 4.

quire all your debts. Behold you faſt to ſtrife and to debate, and to ſmite with the fiſt of wickedneſſe. Ye ſhall not faſt as you doe to day, to make your voices to be heard above. Is it ſuch a faſt, as I have choſen, that a man ſhould afflict his ſoule for a day? And ſo the Prophet goeth on in that place to ſhew what the true faſting is, which muſt be joyned with the outward humiliation: or elſe all that other faſting for a day is nothing. Not that he condemned that which they did in humbling themſelves in faſting, according to Gods commandement, but becauſe they omitted ſundry of the principall parts of their humiliation, and which were indeed the chiefe ends of their ceremoniall faſting: Like as in the firſt of *Eſay*, he condemneth all their ceremoniall worſhip, not that it was evill then, but becauſe they did ſticke and reſt themſelves only in that, and omitted repentance altogether, and that which was the principal and the end of all the outward worſhip: ſo is it in this worke of pacifying the Lord.

Verſ. 5.

The outward humiliation availeth nothing without the inward, & without the other parts of a true faſt.

All muſt goe together.

Eſay 1. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17.

In the Prophet *Zachary* likewiſe, when as the Prieſts and people aske in their affliction, whether they ſhould weepe and ſeparate themſelves in the fifth moneth as they had done: The Lord bids the Prophet to aske of them againe; *When they faſted and mourned in the Captivitie, in the fifth and ſeventh moneth every yeare, whether they faſted to him: and when they did eat and drinke, whether they did it not for themſelves.* And ſo their faſts were for themſelves. After he asketh them, *whether they ſhould not have heard the words which the Lord cried unto them by the miniſtery of the former Prophets, and have yeelded thereunto and repented of their ſinne.* And then he tels them what they ſhould have done; *That they ſhould have executed true judgement, ſhewed mercy and compaſſion.* So that we ſee that unleſſe the humiliation be aright, and according to the word of the Lord, it ſhall never be availeable with his heavenly Majeſtie, but harden the people in their hypocriſie and ſin, to their endleſſe deſtruction.

Zach. 7. 3, 4.

Verſ. 7.

Therefore to come to the means, that their humiliation may be unfained, and ſuch as may undoubtedly availe with the Lord, it muſt be of two ſorts.

The true humiliation muſt be both inward and outward.

1. Of the body. 2. Of the ſoule. And ſo of both joyntly together, as both have offended and deſerved the wrath.

For the bodily and outward humbling of our ſelves, it muſt be

be ſuch as the Lord hath ordained, both to increaſe and alſo to teſtifie the true humbling of our ſoules, which God chiefly reſpects: and that.

1. In abſtaining from all the comforts of this life, ſo farre as the infirmitie of our nature and decency doth permit. As 1. in forbearing utterly for that time all kinde of meat and drinke, unleſſe in caſe of ſickneſſe, or ſome extraordinary weakneſſe of nature. And not to doe it after that Popiſh manner amongſt many of their chiefer ſort: as they uſe to drinke in the morning, to dine well at noone, and to have the fineſt wines and junkers at the night that can be gotten; and which ſerve as much or more to provoke our corrupt nature, or at leaſt to keepe it from all true ſenſe of ſinne, and of ſorrow, as our ordinary repaſt on other daies: beſides the lifting up our hearts in an opinion of merit, and ſatisfying or appeaſing of God thereby; in ſtead of humbling either ſoule or body, according to Gods ordinance.

Of the outward humiliation, and wherin it is.

1. In abſtaining from all the comforts of this life, as from meat and drinke.

Ezra.10.6.

Ion.3.7.

2. We are to abſtaine from all kinde of our owne worke and meanes of gaine (chiefly in the publike faſts) which are to be kept ſolemnly after the manner of Sabbaths. And alſo even in the private faſts, ſo much as the nature of our calling and place will permit. 3. We are to ſeparate our ſelves from all manner of pleaſures and whatſoever may feed the corruption of our nature, or hinder the worke and declaration of our ſound humiliation and ſorrow, and of ſeeking the Lord. 4. Laying aſide for that time our coſtly attire, we are to humble our ſelves in our ſimpleſt apparell: thereby as by all theſe other meanes, to teſtifie that we are unworthy of apparell, or of the leaſt of all Gods mercies; ſo to abaſe our mindes, and pull downe our proud hearts, making us to ſee our vileneſſe, and that we are not worthy of the pooreſt rags to cover our ſhame. And to avoid every thing which may be any token of pride, or conceitedneſſe of our ſelves, or which may hinder the worke or manifeſtation of our unfained repentance before the Lord.

2. From all our owne worke and meanes of gaine.

Lev.23.30.

3. From all manner of pleaſures.

4. From all our coſtly apparell.

Exod.33.5.

Ion.3.5,6.

And whatſoever may be a hinderance to our repentance.

This muſt be for the outward humiliation of the body: whereunto muſt be adjoyned all ſuch outward exerciſes of religion, as by which the outward abſtinence of the body may be ſanctified and made effectuall to worke in every one a godly ſorrow, with all the fruits thereof.

Exerciſes of religion to be adjoyned to the outward humiliation.

As

1. The publike humiliation muſt be in a great aſſembly. *Leu.*23.27. *Neh.*9.1. 2 *Chron.*20.35.

As 1. That the publike faſts be in the greateſt and moſt ſolemne aſſemblies, which are of the chiefeſt power and efficacie to worke mightily upon the affections and hearts of men, as experience hath ever taught.

2. The people are to be warned hereof, and called on to prepare themſelves. *Ioſ.*7.12,13. *Ioel* 1,14.2,16. *Zeph.*2.1.

Secondly, theſe faſts ought therefore to be made knowne before hand to the people, to the end that every one may fit and prepare himſelfe to come before the Lord, in ſuch manner as to be able to helpe to pacifie the wrath, and not to increaſe it. And to this end, the Paſtors ought to ſhew unto them before, the cauſes and preſent neceſſitie of a humiliation, to appeaſe the wrath, and prevent the judgements of the Lord; and likewiſe to declare unto them how this worke of humiliation ought to be performed, with the fruits and effects of all ſuch humiliations, aſſuring them thereof, according to the promiſes of the Lord, and experiences of all ages. And finally, they ought to call upon every ſoule to looke to prepare and ſanctifie themſelves afore-hand, by ſearching out and bewailing their ſinnes, and turning againe unto the Lord, reſolving to obey whatſoever he ſhall ſay unto them. Becauſe the Lord will be ſanctified in all them that come neere unto him, chiefly in any ſuch aſſemblies. In mercy, if they come reverently; in judgement, if they approach in their uncleanneſſe. And according to the manner and meaſure of their preparation, ſo may they expect the meaſure of Gods bleſſing upon their humiliation and his acceptance.

*Exod.*19.10. *Lam.*3.39,40, 41. *Pſal.*4.4,5. *Leu.*10.3. 22.3.

Thirdly, in the ſolemne aſſemblies, there ſhould be alſo theſe helpes and means and the like, for increaſe of their humiliation, with unfained faith & repentance. As 1. The reading of ſuch parts of the word of the Lord, as ſerve chiefly to ſet forth his wrath againſt ſin, the fierceneſſe of it, and the means how he may be pacified, with his offering of mercy to the repentant. For this we know the Lord hath ſanctified as one ſpeciall meanes, to worke a lively humiliation and ſound repentance. 2. The preaching of Gods word, that is, the particular opening and ſetting before the faces of all ſorts, the moſt fearefull ſinnes of the times, with the tokens and cauſes of the Lords anger juſtly kindled againſt them. And ſo to apply theſe things to the ſoules of everie one, as that the word may worke powerfully upon the conſciences of all,

*Matth.*7.2. *Mark.*4.24.

Meanes to be uſed in theſe aſſemblies for working ſound humiliation, with faith and repentance.

1. The reading of Gods word.

2. The preaching of it. *Ion.*1.2,3,4. *Ezr.*10.9,16. *Acts* 2.37.

all, to pierce their very hearts, that each may cry mightily unto the Lord for mercie and forgivenesse, and all turne from their evill way. 3. There must be adjoyned in them a lowly and penitent confession of sinnes, laying forth the particular abominations of the times, with the circumstances thereof, to aggravate them so much as may be, to worke thereby true repentance, and withall an humble acknowledgement of Gods righteousnesse in all his judgements, although he should execute whatsoever he hath denounced: and likewise of the infiniteneſſe of his compassion in sparing his people, with instant supplication and praiers to appease his displeasure, and for obtaining the mercies which we desire. And herein much time would be spent, because this is a chiefe end of our humiliation, to make our praiers more effectuall thereby, and more availeable with the Lord, and also a principall part of the same. 4. Hereunto must be added also a declaration of the Lords free mercie and pardon to every repentant soule, with applying the same comfort to all upon condition of their true repentance, and putting in practice all that which the Lord requires at their hands to doe, and which they have then promised unto him.

3. Humble confession of sinnes with instant praier. *Neh.* 1.2,3,4,5.

4. A declaration and an applying of mercie to the repentant. 2 *Chr.* 20. 15,20. *Acts* 2.37,38.

These exercises, with singing of such Psalmes as may best serve hereto according to the occasion, together with a franke contribution before the departure of the assembly, towards the releefe of their poore brethren, to witnesse the unfainednesse of their humiliation, the breaking off their sinnes by repentance, and by mercie towards the poore, and what ones they purpose to be after; are the principall workes of the solemne humiliation to be performed outwardly.

Singing Psalmes, and contribution to the poore, to testifie their repentance. *Esay* 58.6,7. *Dan.* 4.24.

Now to come to that inward humiliation which is of the soule. Together with these outward workes of humiliation, and these exercises of religion, which are chiefly undertaken to worke on the soules of Gods people, to stirre them up to appease the Lord, and to testifie their true humiliation and repentance inwardly, (which, as was said, is the maine end of all the outward humbling) every one also must labour to feele in his owne heart these workes and operations of Gods Spirit following. Otherwise we can never looke, that our outward humiliation alone, shall

The inward humiliation to be felt by divers operations of Gods spirit in our soules, without which the outward can nothing availe to bring sound comfort.

ſhall be effectuall to pacifie the Lord towards our ſelves, much leſſe towards all other his people.

1. Caſting downe our ſoules, ſeeing our danger by our ſinnes.
2 *Sam.* 12.
1 *Chron.* 21.16, 17.
Dan. 9. 18.

1. The inward caſting downe of everie of our ſoules before his glorious Majeſtie, in the ſight and feeling of our ſinnes and of the ſinnes of our land, as in *David* upon the declaration of Gods diſpleaſure againſt him.

2. Feeling of Gods anger.
Ezr. 10.1,9.

2. To have a ſenſe and feeling of Gods anger in the conſideration of his judgements either paſt, or preſently upon us, or at leaſt threatned unto us: and thoſe as well ſpirituall as bodily. Yea of the ſpirituall judgements moſt of all; in as much as they are moſt dreadfull. And chiefly of that which is the heavieſt of all other and moſt generall, the plague of ſecuritie, induration, and falling away ſtill more and more from the Lord, notwithſtanding all the meanes which he hath uſed to reclaime and ſpare us.

3. Iudging our ſelves.
Pſal. 51.4.
Dan. 9.3,4.

3. Everie one in the conſcience of our ſinnes are to judge our ſelves and our land worthy of all the plagues which the Lord hath threatned againſt vs for the ſame: both of thoſe which we have felt formerly, and alſo thoſe which we feare. And moreover to adjudge our ſelves unworthy to enjoy foode, ſleepe, apparell, or any other comfort of this life any more; and that we have deſerved to be ſtripped of them all.

4. Mourning bitterly for our ſinnes and Gods diſpleaſure.
Ioel 2.13,17.
1 *Sam.* 7.6.

4. That our hearts doe grieve exceedingly, mourning for our owne ſinnes and for the ſinnes of our land, and likewiſe for all the tokens of Gods diſpleaſure, and ſo for his judgements preſent or threatned, yea that they doe even bleed within us for all the diſhonours and provocations done unto his highneſſe.

5. Vowing reformation: offering our ſelves and ours wholly to God.
Eſay 58.6,7.

5. That, as every one muſt with purpoſe of heart forſake his knowne ſinnes, ſo alſo muſt each reſolve forthwith to put all his holy purpoſes and vowes in practiſe; and withall endevour to the uttermoſt to reforme preſently whatſoever is amiſſe: And laſtly, all of us to offer our ſelves wholly to God, to ſhew forth more true zeale and power of godlineſſe in our lives, and in our care for all committed unto our charge, that they may doe the like.

6. Meditation of his promiſes made to ſuch humiliations.

6. That we labour in our ſelves to ſet before our faces the manifold promiſes which the Lord hath made to this right ſeeking of him in ſuch unfained humiliation, and the exceeding

benefits that Gods people have ever received by the like; especially all who have beene truly humbled: to the end to ſtirre up our faith and confidence hereby, to obtaine mercie and favour; our faith being the very life and ſtrength of all true praier.

7. Praying inſtantly and crying loud in the eares of the Lord. *Ion.*3 8. *Rom.*8.26. *Pſal.*62.8. 1 *Sam.*1.15. *Exod.*32.14.

Laſtly, we are to powre out our ſoules in inſtant ſupplications with ſighes and groanes, and in our ſpirits to crie loud in the eares of the Lord, in a lively faith in Chriſt Ieſus, and confident aſſurance of his gratious acceptance of our praiers only in and through him our interceſſour. This is that which ſtaieth the Lords hand, which changeth his minde; that which appeaſeth his wrath, and obtaineth what we would deſire. As we may ſee in the examples of *Moſes* and others. And thus much alſo for the humbling of our ſoules, and ſo for the worke of the ſolemne humiliation in generall.

Time of the continuance of ſuch ſolemne humiliations, ever for a whole day at leaſt.

Now if any ſhall aske how long the time of this humiliation ought to be continued: We anſwer, that it ought to be according to the occaſion of it; either for one whole day, or for ſo many daies as ſhall ſeeme good to the holy wiſdome of the Chriſtian Magiſtrate, directed by the faithfull Miniſters of Chriſt; that the ſinne may be taken away, and Gods wrath fully appeaſed. And to this purpoſe, that it ever ought to be continued for one whole day at leaſt, we may obſerve, that (beſides thoſe ſtrange and extraordinary humiliations in the daies of *Heſter*, and in Ninivie for three daies together) this is uſually noted by the Holy Ghoſt, in all the faſts of Gods people, That they humbled themſelves unto the evening. The reaſon is, for the pulling downe and weakning our rebellious fleſh ſo much as may be, even our corrupt and proud natures, that they may be more ſubject to the ſpirit, and the ſpirit more free to ſeeke the Lord, as experience will teach. That ſo the worke of Gods grace may be more powerfull in us after, and that the Lord ſeeing our unfained humiliation, may take the more compaſſion of us. And hitherto of the manner of the right performance of the worke of humiliation, that it may be more availeable.

*Ioſ.*7.6. *Iud.*21.26. Reaſon for our more effectuall humbling. *Levit.*23.32. *Dan.*9.21.

Things to be done after our humiliation. *Ioſ.*7.25.26.

But yet all this is not ſufficient, unleſſe there follow after in the third place a conſcionable performance by us, of whatſoever we have then promiſed unto the Lord: And chiefly a reformation

reformation of all the grievous abominations whereby he hath beene provoked. And this reformation to be executed by them to whom the Lord hath committed that authoritie and charge. Thus did *Ioſuah* in puniſhing the ſinne of *Achan*. And thus did King *David* take away the crie of *Sauls* ſin for the Gibeonites. And ever in the booke of God the taking away of all the abominations which had provoked the Lord, even to the leaſt cauſes, occaſions and ſignes thereof, have beene the means of appeaſing the wrath. As in *Aſa* and *Iehoſophat*, their taking away the high places, and doing that which the Lord required of them of the other ſide, were the true and principall meanes of pacifying him, and ſtaying his vengeance; and of eſtabliſhing unto them his favour with all proſperitie, peace, and ſafety from all their enemies.

2 Sam.21.14.
1. Reforming all the abominations, as *Ioſua.*
Iudg.10.10,16.
Eſay 1.16. to 20.
David.
Mich.6.8.
2 Chron.14.4,5, & 17.6,9,10.

Now for the fruit and efficacie of ſuch humiliations, in this manner performed in any meaſure without hypocriſie; we have not read nor heard of any one, but it hath much appeaſed the Lords wrath, and procured moreover ſome ſingular bleſſing with it. As we ſaw for thoſe in the daies of *Samuel, Iehoſophat, Heſter, Ionah.* Yea the Lord hath beene ſo pleaſed herewith, as that his anger hath beene ſtaid for the preſent towards his people, when they have but only thus cried unto him in their trouble, and that as may ſeeme hypocritically, ſith they did not unfainedly repent, but turned backe to their ſinnes: like as it is oft repeated in that Pſalme 107. Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their diſtreſſe. The faſting even of wicked *Ahab*, is made an example, how by outward humiliation the plagues of the wicked may be either deferred or leſſened. That becauſe he humbled himſelfe, though only as an hypocrite for feare of the judgement denounced againſt him by *Eliah*, and that but for the preſent, therefore God would not bring that evill threatned, in his owne daies, but did deferre it to his ſonnes daies. And have not we our ſelves ſeene wonderfull experience of the Lords mercy towards this our nation? That ever when we have thus humbled our ſelves crying unto him, he hath ſhewed unto us great deliverances and mercies, howſoever the duties have not beene performed as they ought, nor our crying ſinnes taken away.

The fruit and happie ſucceſſe of all ſuch humiliations.

The power of ſuch humiliations, though not performed in ſuch manner as they ought.

Pſal.107.6.13. 19,28.

1 King.21.27.
Verſ.28.
Verſ.29.

Our owne experience.

away. That our publike fasting by the commandement of our Royall Soveraigne thorow the Land, at the intended invasion mentioned before, and the happie successe which the Lord gave thereunto, not only in his most gratious preservation of us, but also the miraculous overthrow of the enemie, beare witnesse ever hereof; to the eternall praise of his infinite mercie and power, and his readinesse to be found of his people, whensoever they endevour so to seeke him. 88.

To omit all other our publike humiliations, whereof never any was in vaine, but ever some new treason discovered, or some speciall blessing obtained: Let us but call to minde the experience of these daies; and we cannot doubt but that the Lord vouchsafed in a most speciall manner, to heare those cries and sighes of his servants, which in those assemblies they were wont to send up to heaven, both for the preservation of his Anointed, our late happie Queene, and also for the deliverance of his Church, when he should take her from amongst us. Who can doubt but that thereupon amongst other meanes, he shewed us that great worke never to be forgotten, in bringing in and setting up his Anointed servant our dread Soveraigne in her Throne, in an instant, without any terrour; as though she had not beene taken away, but still alive amongst vs, for thereby he saved us, like as we had prayed, so that we did not almost perceive her taken from our head; and thereby delivered us from all our feares, disappointing all the bloudie hopes of our enemies, and continuing withall his Gospell, with all other his blessings remaining amongst us. And thus hath he still to this day at our cries frustrated and overthrowne all their wicked policies and devillish stratagems, to the very hellish Powder-treason, and to this houre.

One principall fruit of all former humiliation, as we may justly thinke.

But to passe over all these which concerne the publike preservation of us, which of all Gods servants hath ever used thus to humble his soule in secret before the Lord, seeking him and the pardon of his sinne (first by searching out his transgressions, and acknowledging them with sorrow of heart, and withall resolving and endevouring to turne from all his evill wayes unto the Lord) who hath not in due time found him answering to his soule? Or if he have thus sought his face in other straights and

Particular experiences in Gods servants privately.

and neceſſities of this life, or for his helpe in any thing whatſoever, according to his heavenly will, with ſubmiſſion to his divine pleaſure, whether he have not found him wonderfull, in that ſame thing wherein he hath ſought him, or in that which hath beene farre better for him, and for his ſalvation? Thoſe who have not made triall, let them prove the Lord herein, whether he be not the ſame ſtill, to all who ſeeke him aright, (with a full reſolution and ſubmiſſion to be ever at his command) as he hath beene formerly to *David*, *Nehemiah*, *Cornelius*, and all other who have ſo ſought him. And if he ſhew himſelfe thus gratious and eaſie to be intreated at the prayers of one of his poore ſervants alone, how much more muſt hee needs be ſo, when ſo many of his children ſhall come about him weeping and crying unto him at once? Muſt not his bowels needs earne over them, to cauſe him to meet them and receive them gladly, as the father of the Prodigall childe, deliver them from all their feares, and rejoyce over them to doe them good?

If he be ſo eaſily intreated of one of his poore ſervants, how much more at the cries of ſo many of his children at once?

Thus have we ſeene the meanes whereby the Lord may be appeaſed; firſt, by humbling our ſelves thus before him generally. Secondly, by taking away all the abominations which have provoked him, ſo farre as we are able. Laſtly, by endevouring unfainedly the renewing of our Covenant with him. But untill this time, ſo farre as I am able to judge by the whole tenour of Gods word, we can never have any comfortable aſſurance hereof, nor of any ſafetie from a more terrible judgement than all the former which we have felt; for the word of the Lord muſt needs be verified which he hath denounced, That he will puniſh his owne people being ſtubborne againſt him, yet ſeven times more, according as their ſinne is increaſed: untill hee have either brought them to ſubmit themſelves unto his word, or conſumed them, or ſcattered them over the face of the earth, having made their Cities deſolate, their Land a wilderneſſe, and the enemies to inſult over them, or at leaſt brought their Sanctuarie to nought, or ſome other notable judgement upon them.

Till this time can never be any comfortable hope of eſcaping a more terrible judgement. *Levit.* 26. 21. 28. 29. 31. *to* 34. *Eſay* 9. 21.

And thus much for the publike meanes of paciſying the Lords anger. Where theſe faile, and that the Prophets and meſſengers of God cannot prevaile, that all generally may thus joyntly ſeeke the Lord publikely, yet are they in the ſame tender

Publike humiliations failing, Gods meſſengers are to ſtir up his owne ſervants to ſeek him privately.

affections

affections to call upon the Lords owne faithfull ſervants, that they themſelves then ſeeke him privatly: and that ſo much more inſtantly, as the ſecuritie of the multitude is greater, and the danger of Gods diſpleaſure more fearefull. So doth the Prophet *Zephany*, who firſt having called on all the Nation, to gather and ſift themſelves, though they were a Nation not worthy to be beloved, and that they ſhould doe it before the decree came forth, [before it was executed, and ſo the time paſt] when they were as chaffe; yet having ſmall hope of them, in generall, he turnes his ſpeech to the faithfull ones, ſaying thus unto them: *Seeke yee the Lord all the meeke of the earth which have wrought his judgement, ſeeke righteouſneſſe, ſeeke lowlineſſe, if ſo be that you may be hid in the day of wrath*; where the Lord declares who they are, that are in chiefe favour with his Majeſtie, and whom he would yet have to ſeeke him, when all other give over, and when all things ſeeme deſperate, that there can be no more hope of any generall turning or ſeeking unto him.

Zeph. 2. 1.

Verſ. 3.

What manner of men they are who muſt be called on then to ſeeke him.

First, they are the meeke ones of the earth, ſuch as *Moſes* was: of whom the holy Ghoſt ſaith, *that he was the meekeſt man upon all the earth.* Such as are meeke to ſtoope unto the Lord, both unto his word, and to every of his corrections, without any repining: meeke in ſuffering all wrongs and injuries done unto themſelves, as he was for the wrongs of *Miriam* and of others; ſtill crying to the Lord for the people, when they are readie to ſtone him. They muſt be thoſe who have wrought his judgement, [thoſe who in all the time of the moſt generall back-ſliding to all irreligious prophaneneſſe, and of the greateſt rebellion of the wicked, doe ſtill cleave unto the Lord and his holy commandement, working that which he hath judged and ſaid to be right and juſt, and not following the waies and judgement of the world.] Theſe meeke ones who have ſtill thus continued walking with God as *Enock*, have beene the only men in favour with God in every age. Their prayers through the goodneſſe and gratious promiſes of the Lord, have ſo farre prevailed, as to ſhut and open heaven; to pacifie his anger, to ſave whole Nations, or at leaſt to obtaine that themſelves might be hid and preſerved ſafe in the day of wrath. As we ſee in *Abraham, Moſes, Samuel, Noah, Iob, Daniel, Eliah*, with others.

1. The meeke ones of the earth, as *Moſes. Numb. 12. 3.*

Verſe 13.

2. Thoſe who have wrought Gods judgement. *Zeph. 2. 3.*

Theſe in all ages have been the only men in favour, and preſervers of the reſt.

Ezek. 14. 13, 14.

Iob 22. 30.

In such desperate cases all are to intreat the meeke ones to crie unto the Lord for them.
1 *Sam.*7.8.
1 *Sam.*12.19.
*Ezek.*22.30,31.
The Lord seeks such to stand in the breach.
When he finds none such, the vengeance commeth.
*Ierem.*5.1.
Esay 1. 12, 15.
Esay 66.3.

Zeph. 2. 3.
*Psal.*34.15.
The godly must labour to be daily more righteous, that their prayers may more prevaile: so more meeke.
*Apoc.*22.11.
*Dan.*6. 5.
Luke 1.6.
*Dan.*7.17,18.
6.10.
*Exod.*3.5.
Iob 1.5.
*Psal.*26.6.
Esay 6.5,7.
Levit. 10. 3.
Gen. 18.27.

Gen. 8. 21.

These are they of whom the holy Ghost saith, that *the innocent shall deliver the Iland.*

Secondly, when a people come into this desperate case, these men chiefly are to be called upon by all the rest, to step up into the breach, to stay the Lord from the execution of his vengeance. Like as the people in their distresse runne to *Samuel* and crie to him, that he cease not to crie unto the Lord for them: so *the Lord himselfe seekes for such, to make up the breach,* and to stand *in the gap before him for the Land, as Moses did; that hee might not destroy it.* And when he findes none, then his indignation breaketh in unto destruction, as it did here upon Iudah at this Captivitie. So that all the strength and hope of a people that can come from man, remaineth only in the meanes of these, and of their prayers in such evill times; the prayers of all the wicked being odious unto his Holinesse, and no better than the sacrifice of a dogge, (as the Prophet *Esay* speaketh) untill they have either altogether turned from their evill way, or at least set themselves to seeke the Lord in true humiliation, and to turne as we have heard.

Thirdly, to the end that the prayers of these may be so availeable, what must they doe? They must still seeke righteousnesse: [that is, they must labour to be more righteous daily; so as all the world may not be able to have the least matter against them, except it be as against *Daniel*, for the matters of their God, even for their care and conscience to walke uprightly in all the Commandements and Ordinances of the Lord, and for that they dare not sin against him, whatsoever become of them and theirs.] They must studie daily to be more sanctified, *to put off the shooes off their feet,* all their carnall and worldly affections, and whatsoever may displease the Lord, like as he bids *Moses.* Thus must they be continually washing their hands in innocencie, as *David* saith that he would; that they may so become more meet to approch neere unto his Highnesse in so holy and so great a businesse, as to become such intercessors as *Abraham* and *Moses* were, for so sinfull a people, and that they may offer up such sacrifices, as whereby to make an attonement, and that the Lord may smell in them a savour of rest, both from the former plagues, and much more from those which he threatneth to bring.

They

They must also seeke lowlinesse, to be still more base in their owne eyes, as *Abraham*, *Moses*, *Iob*, *David*, and *Daniel*. That they may daily fall upon their faces before the Lord, and therein not only acknowledge themselves dust and ashes, and utterly unmeet and unable to appeare before his glorious Majestie; but more also, that in the sense of all their frailties and sinnes, they may be able unfainedly to confesse themselves to be altogether unworthy to stand before the Lord, and much more to become intreaters of his Majesty for the sparing of his people. Thus must they seeke lowlinesse daily more and more; oft humbling themselves in fasting and prayer before him. Like as *Moses* did for fortie daies together, so must these labour (if it were possible) day by day, with that holy *Nehemiah*: At least to doe it so often and so farre forth as the Lord requireth, and as the strength of their natures and their opportunities will conveniently permit. And to doe this, either families mourning apart, or every meeke one apart by himselfe, as the Lord saith, that his people shall mourne and lament for their iniquities. Herein they are continually to acknowledge and bewaile all their owne sinnes, with all the fearefull sinnes and provocations of the people, even of all states and degrees. Thus must we acknowledge the righteousnesse of Gods judgements in all his plagues which have been upon us, and which he further threatneth; looking at him whom we all *have pierced and crucified*, which is able to breake our hearts, and to *make us to weepe bitterly as for the losse of an only sonne*. And thus must wee crie unto him for mercie and pardon, doubling and multiplying our supplications before his divine Majestie, as that holy man *Daniel* doth. After this manner must we unceassantly importune our good God, for his infinite and endlesse compassion, his glory, his promises made unto his Church, the blasphemies of his enemies, as *Moses* doth when he continued in his humble intreatie and supplications for Gods people, falling downe for them for fortie daies together. Yet are we ever to be carefull to make the attonement, and put up every petition only in the name of our Lord and Saviour Iesus Christ, the Angell of the Covenant, the alone Mediator and Advocate of his people, that beloved Sonne, in whom the Father is so well pleased, with all who are such meeke ones, that we

Zeph. 2. 3.
Numb. 16. 4, 22.
Gen. 18. 27.
2 *Sam.* 6. 12.
Iob 39. 37. 42. 6.

And seeke the Lord privatly, as *Moses*, *Nehemiah* and *Daniel*.

Esay 6. 5.
Deut. 9. 15.
Nehem. 1. 4.
Zach. 12. 13, 14.

Dan. 9. 3, 4.

The manner how to importune the Lord.

Zach. 12. 10, 11.

Dan. 9.

Deut. 9. 25, 26, 27, 28.

Only in the name of Christ the Mediator of his Church.

we being such, he can deny us nothing that is good for us, which we so begge in his name. All this we are moreover to seeke, that God the Father of our Lord Iesus may be magnified in the declaration of the riches of his mercie, in that his blessed Sonne, who is to be praised for evermore; and all this attonement to be made in his bloud alone, which speaketh better things than the bloud of *Abel*.

Hebr. 12. 46.

After this manner are all these humble servants of the Lord to seeke his face continually, that either they may prevaile with his Majestie for the sparing of all his people, or at least for the mitigating of the judgement, and that they may save their owne soules, and so be hid in the day of the Lords wrath. One of these two or both, they shall be sure to finde, the lesse of them alone being an abundant reward, for all the labour that any of us can take, in thus seeking him, though it were to doe it day and night and never give him over.

Zeph. 2. 3. They shall thus helpe either to pacifie the Lord for all the people, or be hid themselves. *Ezek.* 9. 4.

Thus have we seene also the private meanes, which all the meeke and righteous servants of the Lord are to use continually in all such times, to stay the execution of the Lords decree; when all other meanes doe faile, yet this remaines. Then this patheticall crie of the Prophet *Zephany* is ever to sound in the eares of all the faithfull; *Seeke yee the Lord all the meeke of the earth, who have wrought his judgement, seeke righteousnesse, seeke lowlinesse, if that yee may be hid in the day of the Lords wrath.*

This cry of the Prophet *Zephany* to the faithfull, is ever to sound in all our eares, when all other meanes faile. *Zeph.* 2. 3.

Obiect. Complaint of the weake Christian for his unabilitie thus to seeke the Lord privatly.

But concerning this dutie of thus seeking the Lord, the greatest part of these meeke and deare servants of the Lord, may complaine after this manner: we evidently perceive and acknowledge this call of the Lord even to us, thus to seeke to pacifie him. It is indeed in our eares, and we are most desirous to doe it, for that the time, if ever, doth certainly require it, all these things before mentioned being rightly considered. But alas we finde no abilitie in our selves to performe the same; we are not able to spend so much as one houre of a day fruitfully in such a holy businesse, according to the nature of a true fast with any comfort for our owne selves, and much lesse for the Church of God; what might we doe to be assisted and directed herein?

Answ. 1. To practise those things re-

To this I answer: That first we are diligently to consider all those things which are required to be performed in a publike fast,

fast, to practise them in the first place, so farre forth as they may concerne each of us privatly, and as we may doe them by our selves. Secondly, we are seriously to bethinke our selves of the speciall ends of our humiliation, and what it is that we should seeke the Lord for therein. The ends are principally these: First, the pacifying the Lords wrath, and the turning away his plagues from us. The second is, the perpetuall happinesse of us al, the continuance and increase of all his mercies and blessings both to us and our posteritie. And finally, that hereby we our selves specially, may ever have boldnesse to stand before the Lord both now, and at the last glorious day. Now for the first of these, that is, the pacifying of the Lords wrath kindled against us for all our sinnes; how may we hope to effect it, but even as *Daniel* doth, by considering wisely the generall and grievous transgressions of our Land; or the principall of them for which the Lord is undoubtedly provoked, as he manifesteth in his word; and the plagues which they have deserved, which are either upon us alreadie, or which we have just cause to feare? And then to confesse them, as those whereof we are all in some sort guiltie, being all of the same bodie, as Israel was guiltie and under Gods anger for *Achans* sinne, as was shewed before: and whereby our Land is polluted, and will spue us out, unlesse it be purged, and so the Lord pacified thereby. Thus did that holy and righteous man *Daniel*, whom the Lord hath caused to be set before our eies, for a worthy example and patterne to follow, both for his holinesse, his righteousnesse, his seeking the Lord for his people in fasting and in prayer, his confession and supplication in his humiliation, with the power and effect thereof. How the Lord did confirme him in the full assurance of his favour and love, and his gratious approbation of that his holy affection and worke, *That he was a man greatly beloved*, and also how he sent his glorious Angell for his comfort, and to answer and confirme him, above all that ever he could expect. How he granted unto him not only the knowledge and assurance of that thing wherein hee sought the Lords favour; but also made knowne unto him the comming of the Messiah, for the perpetuall comfort of all his Church.

quired in a publike humiliation so farre as they concerne us privatly.

2. To consider the ends of our Fast why we seeke the Lord.

To follow the example of *Daniel* in our private fasts. *Dan.* 9.

2 *Sam.* 21. 1.

Jos. 7. 10, 11. 12, 13.

Levit. 18. 18. 20. 22.

Dan. 9. 2, 3. *to* 20. 21.

The acceptance and fruits of *Daniels* humiliation.

Let us be provoked to this dutie by these holy men, and the successe which God gave.

Besides him, the Lord hath likewise left unto us the worthy

Nehemiah. *Nehem.* 1.

example of that holy *Nehemiah*, and how he was affected for Gods people, causing him to seek the Lord in fasting and prayer, for those things which might concerne their wealth, happinesse and securitie; even so are we now to doe. That he would vouchsafe unto us those things that may concerne not only the pacifying of his Majestie for the present, but also the assurance of his favour and love. That he would grant unto us repentance and faith. True repentance for all our former abominations; true faith to beleeve his holy and heavenly word; to receive and embrace his Gospell more joyfully; and more willingly and cheerefully to submit our selves, to walke in his Covenant on our parts; that so on his part, his covenant of mercie and peace may ever remaine with us and ours. And thus much for answer to the first complaint.

Acts 28. 21.

Psal. 103. 17, 18.

Obiect. 2. The 2. complaint of the weake Christian of unability to confesse our sinnes, and beg the things which concerne our peace.

2. *Objection.* Oh but saith the weake Christian; I finde my selfe unable to doe these things; either to confesse our great and hainous sinnes, or to see them so as I ought, and much more to see aright and beg in particular the principall graces necessarie for the Church of God, and the things belonging unto our peace. I cannot conceive the least part of them; so that I cannot proceed as I should in any sort or measure, that I may have true comfort that my service is accepted of the Lord.

Answ. We are to turne our eyes to the Covenant of the Lord, and that will teach us.

Answer. To you I answer; that to be able to doe this, we must turne our eyes to the Covenant of the Lord, which we all who professe Christ have entred into: There to behold first how we have offended and provoked the Lord, transgressing both against his heavenly Law and Gospell, to bewaile and beg pardon for all our transgressions; and then to see and consider there, what the Lord requireth at our hands, for the renewing of our Covenant with him, and his with us, that we may begin to yeeld obedience to the same.

The first part of this Watch containing the Covenant of the Lord, will direct how we may be assured of his favour. Watch, part. 1. pag. 19, 20, 21.

Now to the end that we may thus turne our eyes to his Covenant, and have our hearts so prepared and affected thereby; as we are to search the word of the Lord, so for our more readie and plaine furtherance hereunto, unlesse he shall afford us better direction, we may use the helpe of the first part of this Watch, which containeth the summe of his Covenant, what he requireth, that we may be his people; and upon what condition he will

will be our God, and so remaine. There we may see how the whole Church, or a whole nation may be assured of his favour and love. What a change is required in every sinfull nation, even in the whole body of the Church, to turn generally from all their sins and transgressions. As it is with one man alone for obtaining the knowledge and assurance of Gods favour & love, so is it with a whole Church or nation. There we may behold also in some sort, what the danger is of our fearefull sins, and of our impenitency in them; & how our sin is increased by many circumstances. And likewise what would be the blessing and assurance that we may undoubtedly expect in our generall repentance and turning againe unto the Lord. We may there in the glasse of the Law, behold clearely how we have broken our covenant in every commandement, and in every branch of each commandement; chiefly those of the first table, which are directly against the Majestie of the Lord to provoke him the more to anger against us. If therefore we can doe these things in every one of the commandements: First, seriously consider of our sinne, and chiefly in those things, which brought this wrath upon Gods people at this captivitie: and withall each of us, wherein we are guiltie, to confesse it against our selves before the Lord, and what plagues we have deserved, according to the denunciations against Iudah, and those of the Law set downe Deut. 28. Levit. 26. And afterward see our like contempt, or at least our neglect of the Gospell, and confesse it; in that we have not brought forth the fruit thereof: which are likewise set downe particularly in that first part of this Watch, in every article, and each severall branch thereof. Secondly, if we can mourne unfainedly for the same, crying for pardon through our Christ, for our selves and for the whole land; and that all of us may repent and turne from those and from all our evill waies. Thirdly, if after this, we can but behold in the covenant, what new obedience the Lord requires at our hands unto each commandement, (because though beleeving in Christ, we are freed from the curse and rigour of the Law, yet are we bound to an Euangelicall obedience, an unfained desire and endevour of a perfect and intire obedience;) and so if we can begge instantly of his Majestie, that all of us may generally returne thereunto, and submit

As it is with one man, so is it with a whole people.

Watch, part 1. pag. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28.

In the glasse of the Law we may see our transgression of the covenant, and what repentance and obedience the Lord requireth of us.

Manner how to use this so as to helpe us in humbling our selves.

Beholding our sinnes.

Confessing them.

Mourning and crying for pardon.

Begging for grace to returne and to submit our selves to walke humbly in that his covenant.

submit our ſelves to walke humbly in all the Covenant of the Lord, and ſo in a fervent deſire to yeeld a cheerefull obedience both to the Law and Goſpell of Chriſt; to bring forth the fruits of the Goſpell, and to grace it by a holy converſation. This, even this ſhould be a humiliation and faſt, a ſervice and ſacrifice moſt ſweet, acceptable and pleaſing unto the Lord.

Theſe things wee muſt come unto generally in an outward conformitie, at leaſt before we can be aſſured of Gods favour.

Example of our uſe of the glaſſe of the Law for humiliation.

Pſal. 14. 1. Making ſpeciall markes upon our principall and moſt generall ſinnes and wants, and having a catalogue of them in our hearts, we may performe this with more eaſe, feeling, and inſtancie.

As for example, firſt looking upon the ſinnes. To begin at that firſt moſt hainous ſinne, againſt the firſt Commandement, that ſinne of Atheiſme, whereby men live as if there were no God, and therein ſeriouſly conſidering, what multitude we have of thoſe fooles, whoſe lives ſeeme to proclaime, *that they ſay in their hearts there is no God*; as all their outragious ſwaggering and licencious courſes doe witneſſe. Or ſecondly, how God is provoked by the *ignorance* of his people; and withall to bethinke our ſelves of the generall blindneſſe every where to the great diſhonour of his name, the deſtroying of innumerable ſoules, notwithſtanding that hee hath vouchſafed us his word ſo long, and the light to ſhine ſo gloriouſly in ſo many places. So likewiſe the breach of every Commandement thorowout. And then the generall contempt of the Goſpell; our deſert to have it taken from us, and given to a people that would bring forth the fruit of it, and we utterly deprived of the comfort of every part thereof. Thus in beholding theſe to confeſſe them with ſorrow and griefe of heart, and how our Land is polluted by them, and to crie for pardon and for the taking away and purging of theſe and all other our ſinnes. On the contrary part, viewing and conſidering well, what *knowledge* the Lord requires in all his people, with acknowledgement of the ſame, that he may be honoured, and his people ſaved; to beg inſtantly that this knowledge may abound with the meanes thereof, in each Congregation. And ſo in every branch of each ſeverall Commandement, and in every article of the Faith, to beg that Ieſus Chriſt may be magnified, by the knowledge and obedience of him in all places.

Vſe of the glaſſe of the Goſpell.

How to beg the graces which ſhould make us a happie people, and to be aſſured of Gods favour.

This labour undoubtedly, though it were but in our very deſires, in the ſighes and groanes of our hearts privately powred out before the Lord ſincerely, although never ſo weakely, yet it ſhould pleaſe him aboue many ſacrifices, and bring moſt ſtrong

The fruit and bleſſing of this labour.

aſſurance

assurance to our owne soules, of the Lords gratious favour and approbation of us, when we could have but this feeling of the state of the Church and people of the Lord. Thus might wee have a most plaine direction, to lead us by the hand, that wee should be sure we should not erre. When we shall see our selves labouring for the whole bodie of the Church, and specially for our Church and Nation, whereof we are members, as for our owne soules. This is the surest meanes of securitie to the Church, or any people, even this generall returning and submission to the Covenant, repenting of every transgression, and walking in obedience to every Commandement. And therefore are we to strive with the Lord, that yet at length we may see such a generall repentance and obedience to the word of the Lord, and the Gospell to be received with all cheerefulnesse, that we may become a zealous and glorious people, and our assemblies, as those of the Primitive Church, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. Thus by a right meditation wee shall be enabled to pray with feeling and fervencie by the helpe of that direction, and be heard as *Daniel* was, or have our prayers to turne into our owne bosomes.

The certaintie of this direction and warning.

Labouring for all, as for our selves particularly.

This generall turning and submission, the only meanes of securitie.

Acts 2. 3, 4.

Comfort in this labour.

After this performed in this manner, the second part hereof, that is, the *Rule of prayer*, is yet a further direction and helpe how wee may pray for the whole Church of God and every member thereof, according as our Saviour hath given it to that end, that both we may beg aright, and according unto our times as the praier is applied, that so asking we may be sure to receive. Therein are we to labour principally in the first and second Petitions, for the glorifying of Gods name and the comming of his kingdome; that it may please him to magnifie his owne power and mercie in the pardoning and saving us, and turning his hand against his enemies; and also for causing his Gospell to prosper, against all the subtiltie and power of Antichrist and of hell. And then undoubtedly all other things shall be granted unto us.

The Rule of praier a further direction and helpe hereunto.

To labour chiefly in the two first Petitions.

Though in regard of their weaknesse, any shall use but those very formes of prayer, and the words as they are set downe in the booke, so that they crie to God instantly in their hearts for them, they may and shall undoubtedly finde comfort in the Lords

The weake Christians in regard of their weaknesse may use the very formes in the booke with comfort.

Lords acceptation. And thus much for the meanes which weake Christians may use, unlesse the Lord shall affoord them better helpes. By which together with the helpes herein contained and the reading of fit places of the word and other holy praiers, they may be fruitfully exercised to spend much time with comfort before the Lord. Hitherto of the meanes to pacifie the Lord, and of the holy care and love of Gods messengers to his people to direct them in this behalfe.

Gods messengers are not only to be carefull to save a people from Gods wrath, but also from comming under it againe. *Gen.9.15,16.* *1 Pet.2.22.*

Yet this is not enough, that they shew thus their tender compassion in directing all to escape the wrath, and seeking to pull them from the vengeance, as the Angels did *Lot* and his out of Sodome (though it be a happie beginning) unlesse they continue the like holy affections and care of those Angels to warne all that they doe not turne backe towards Sodome againe, lest they should returne *as the dog to his vomit, and as the sow to her wallow:* because that shall make their case farre worse This is that which the Lord saith by *Ieremy, that he will speake suddenly concerning a nation or kingdome to build it up and to plant it; but if that nation or people returne to doe evill, he will repent of the good which he thought to doe for them*; if they shall fall backe, from their holy purposes and beginning. The longer the Lord spares a people, and the oftner he deferreth the execution of his wrath, upon their promises and shewes of repentance and amendment, if they fall backe, their plagues must needs be so much heavier when they come; and this must needs increase the anger to the uttermost. And therefore they who are true spirituall fathers and men of God indeed, must have the affections of faithfull *Abraham*, so to forewarne and direct, so farre as they can, that the people may continue to walke in the waies of the Lord, that he likewise may continue to be a gracious prorector unto them, and bring upon them all the good that he hath promised unto his.

Ier.18.9.

Neh.1.3.

Gen.18.19.

Q. How a people may be kept from backsliding.

Quest. But you will demand againe, what are those meanes whereby a people may be so preserved, from turning againe to their former sinnes: for we all see how soone a people are ready to goe backe, and how multitudes who have had good beginnings, chiefly at those times of our great deliverances, when God so visibly shewed himselfe, and at our publike humiliations,

ons, and who began to turne from their evill waies, are yet generally turned unto them againe; yea become much worse, and more without hope of returning than ever heretofore; and now almost without any feeling or feare of any more judgements, and therefore a heavier vengeance must needs be very neere unto us. And so ever the moe deliverances, the heavier plague when it comes.

Answ. The meanes to keepe a people from falling back from their repentance begun, and so from the heaviest vengeance, and contrarily to preserue them ever under the favour of the Lord, are of two sorts. 1. To take away carefully so much as may be, the causes of all the evils; to stop and drie up the sinke of all the abominations, at the very head, and withall to cleanse the fountaines, from whence obedience and holinesse are to proceed, for otherwise the evils can never be taken away, but all sorts shall become as vile and polluted, as ever they were before, and so the plague be made seven times more. Moreover also, where the beginning of the sinke is, there must the purging begin, otherwise there is great danger that the vengeance of the Lord shall there first be declared; as wee see here how hee commanded to begin at the Sanctuary even for this very cause. This was the reason why the Lord so cries out of the sinnes of the wicked Priests and false Prophets, with their corrupt Rulers under the name of the Pastors and Watch-men of Israel, as striving to have those to see their sinnes, and to have them taken away first, especially of the Priests and Prophets, and those who were about the Sanctuary of the Lord. Because, from the Sanctuary from whence the pure waters of Gods Spirit should have flowed out, that is, all holy instruction and admonition, and so all grace and obedience should have proceeded, from thence wickednesse streamed out into all the Land. They (as we heard the Prophet complaining) strengthned the hand of the wicked, that none could turne from his evill way. And therefore they were unto the Lord as Sodome and Gomorrah; they above all other provoked him to hasten his vengeance, and that he could not endure them. Thence was it that the vengeance must needs so begin at the Sanctuary by the Lords owne appointment, like as it did. So then as the diligent care, to search out and take away those

A. The meanes to keepe a people from back-sliding, and ever under Gods favour.

Esay 1. 16, 17.

1. To take away the causes of the evils. And to cleanse carefully the fountaines of obedience.

Levit. 26.

Ezek. 34.

Ier. 23. 9, 10, &c.

Esc. 56. 10, 11, 12.

So principally the Sanctuary.

Ezek. 47. 12.

Because all obedience and grace is to flow thence.

Ierem. 23. 15.

Whence contrarily all wickednes streams till it be cleansed.

Vers. 14.

And therefore the vengeance begins there,

Here they should have begun to purge. For want hereof they ever fell backe.

thoſe abominations of the Sanctuary (for which we heard in the firſt place, the anger of the Lord to have beene ſo kindled) ſhould have beene the chiefe meanes, both to have taken away their ſin, and to have ſtaied the courſe of it, and likewiſe to have kept them from turning backe, when they had renewed their Covenant with the Lord; ſo muſt it be ever with any people. The maine cauſes of the evils being thus redreſſed, the evils themſelves muſt needs be reſtrained, and never otherwiſe as they ought. Theſe becomming truly religious, all or moſt part will follow, at leaſt for an outward obedience. And therefore, thoſe firſt and principall abominations from which all others iſſue, muſt of neceſſitie be ſearched out in the firſt place, and ſo much as may be by all holy means taken away, chiefly by them whom God hath ordained and ſet to that end, if ever a people ſhall be kept from running againe, under the wrath and vengeance of the Lord.

The cauſes of the evils being removed, ſo will alſo the evils flowing from them.

The fountaines of obedience and grace to be heedfully looked unto to be kept pure.

As this muſt be the firſt care for the ſafe preſerving of a people, in thus taking away all the cauſes whereby they might returne unto their ſinne againe; ſo withall the chiefe meanes of all obedience and grace muſt be heedfully looked unto, to be carefully preſerved every where, and the fountaines of them kept pure and cleane. What theſe meanes are ſo to keepe a people in a holy obedience, and thereby under this favour and protection of the Lord, for their preſent and eternall happineſſe, every man knoweth. Even theſe which he hath ordained to ſubdue and to rule both the outward and the inward man. The advancing the ſcepter of Ieſus Chriſt every where, and cauſing that all may bow thereunto: that is, that the word of the Lord, that ſpirituall ſword, whereby he ruleth amongſt his people, may be ſet up and eſtabliſhed in every place; ſith thereby alone and by his holy ſpirit he reigneth and ruleth in the ſoules and conſciences of men, both bringing them under him, and keeping them in obedience. For through want of knowledge of the word of the Lord, and thereby for lacke of the knowledge of ſinne and of Gods anger due unto it, his people are deſtroied, as he complaines in *Hoſeah*; and ſheweth plainly by wiſe *Salomon*, that *where prophecie faileth [or where there is no viſion] the people periſh.* They are naked and lie open to the malice of the enemie,

viz. A holy miniſterie countenanced by the godly Magiſtracie.

The miſerable eſtate of a people deſtitute of a faithfull miniſterie. *Hoſ.* 4.6. *Prov.* 29.18.

enemie, and also to the curse and vengeance of the Lord. And contrarily where there are his faithfull ministers to declare his word unto his people, they turne and keepe them from their evill waies and from his wrath. They cause them to keepe his lawes whereby they are blessed. So that the learned conscionable and holy ministerie must be the first and principall meanes to preserve the Lords people: and therewithall the godly Magistrate not only to countenance the painfull ministerie, but also to compell all the people to yeeld obedience thereunto. Such Magistrates and Rulers hath he ordained, as may execute not mans judgements but Gods, and who may be in his owne place to cause all to obey him; that thereby all the people may be admonished and restrained, that they sinne not against him, that his wrath may not come upon them. Thus did that worthy King *Iehosophat*: he both caused the people to be taught the law of the Lord in every place, and withall set every where such Iudges and Rulers as might admonish and keepe them, that they should not sinne against the Lord, and might execute Gods judgements for the transgressing of his lawes. And hereupon the Holy Ghost saith, that the feare of the Lord fell upon all the kingdomes round about them, when they saw these things, and how he fought for them.

The happie estate of a people living under a holy ministerie countenanced by a godly Magistracie. *Ier.* 23.22. *Prov.* 29.18.

2 *Chron.* 19.6,7.

2 *Chron.* 17.9.

2 *Chr.* 19.5,20.

2 *Chro.* 17.10.

2 *Chro.* 19.29.

How should a people otherwise descending from *Adam*, continue in obedience unto the Lord, unlesse they be continually taught his Covenant and lawes; and the stubborne and disobedient kept under by authoritie of the Magistrates appointed by the Lord thereunto? Such Magistrates as those of *Iehosophats*, being set in Gods place, having his feare, must be the keepers of both the Tables, by executing his judgements on al the transgressors. *Moses* and *Aaron* must goe together to guide Gods people aright and to bring them to Canaan. This is the Lords ordinance. This hath he taught even unto us our selves, by much happy experience in many parts of our land, where he hath vouchsafed such a ministerie, with a godly Magistrate to countenance it. So that the people there have beene brought to a very great measure of obedience and grace, and growne in the same daily. Insomuch as that in sundry of those, you should scarsely have heard of one Papist, blasphemer, or any one riotous

Experience of both amongst our selves.

riotous or prophane person. And of the other side, where they have had either a blinde guide, an ignorant, lewd or unconscionable Minister, and with him a Magistrate as careless for religion, or no Magistrate at all; or else the Minister having some goodnesse, yet the Officer hath beene an enemie, or a scorner of religion, there the people have remained generally ignorant, superstitious, prophane, irreligious, many outragious in all impietie and ungratiousnesse; their Sabbaths being polluted as amongst the Heathen. So that to goe forth of the one into the other, you should seeme to goe forth of heaven into hell: under the faithfull Minister and good Magistrate a heaven; but under the other a very picture of hell commonly, in one kinde of abomination or other. In the one God hath manifestly dwelt and reigned, in the other hath Sathan had his throne. Whereby the Lord hath convinced us by our owne experience, besides the evidence of his heavenly word; and hath most clearely shewed us the meanes how his favour may be retained, and all our blessings and happinesse ever continued, if wee will our selves. Moreover all must needs confesse, that knowledge, feare and conscience, which are the only roots of all true obedience, are principally nourished and preserved by the faithfull Ministerie and holy Magistracie.

The Lord hath herein convinced all our consciences.

Thus have we seene likewise the meanes, whereby a people are kept from falling backe from the Lord, and so from bringing a heavier vengeance upon themselves. First, the taking away the maine causes of falling backe to the former sinnes. Secondly, by having a learned faithfull Ministerie and a holy Magistracie in every place, to keepe both soule and bodie in a holy obedience. And therefore that all the faithfull Prophets of the Lord, and all who wish well to Gods people, are to crie for these continually, both unto the Lord, and to all other, whom hee hath set in his place, for the saving of his people, that these may be set up, and evermore maintained and encouraged every where.

Conclusion of the meanes to be kept from Apostacie and incurring Gods displeasure againe.

All to crie for these to be amongst us in Gods place.

And to this end also, that there may be a continuall supply and succession of such leaders and guides, and also of a wise, understanding, and obedient people; the Messengers of the Lord are to call continually for a holy care to be had, for the

The Schooles of good learning to be regarded above all things for a perpetuall supplie and succession of such Magistrates and Ministers.

Schooles

Schooles of the Prophets to be chiefly regarded, that these Nurseries and Seminaries of all good learning may flourish; to wit, both the greater Schooles, as the Vniversities, and also the lesse to furnish the greater, and all other callings. And also that the best meanes and orders of learning and government, be provided for them all and established in them, and the same in like manner strictly put in practise, for the perpetuall preservation and happinesse of the Church of God; whereunto how farre I have proceeded to shew my love and heartie desire towards our poore country Schooles, I referre my selfe and my indevours unto the judgement and conscience of all, who unfainedly love the Gospell, and desire the flourishing of this our Church and Nation. And hitherto of the meanes of keeping a people in obedience to the Lord, and from bringing on themselves a farre heavier vengeance, by turning to their sinnes againe.

The best means of learning to be sought out, established and strictly put in practise in them.
My travels to that end.

A last dutie of the true Messenger of God, and whose heart is tenderly affected to his people, is this, to comfort and confirme the hearts of all the godly, who live amongst the wicked, whatsoever judgement shall come, and against all their trials and temptations. For thus speakes the Lord unto all his true Prophets; *Comfort yé, comfort ye my people:* and he will require as strict an account for those who are readie to faint and give over for lacke of confirmation and strengthning from them, as for those who perish for lacke of knowledge or warning. This is the cause why all the Prophets doe ever so use to comfort Gods owne faithfull people in the end of their prophecies, or intermix sundrie heavenly consolations; and above all, the Euangelicall Prophet *Esay*. But for those sweet and heavenly comforts belonging to all the true and faithfull servants of the Lord, who cleave fast unto him, I will referre them to the shutting up of all, for the lively refreshing of every wearied soule, that waiteth for the Lord in the way of righteousnesse.

A last dutie of the faithfull messenger of God to this end, to comfort and confirme the harts of all the godly living amongst the wicked in such times. *Esay* 40. 1. *Ezek.* 34. 16.

Comforts to all the godly referred to the end, and shutting up of all.

Thus have we seene the duties that all the true Prophets of the Lord are in their tender affections ever to performe towards his people when his wrath is rushing upon them. First, to pull them out of the fire of his vengeance: And secondly, to contend by all meanes, that they may never fall backe to their former abominations, so to kindle the wrath againe, and to

bring themſelves into the ſame danger as before, or far greater.

The Prophets never to leave off their importuning the Lord, though having uſed all theſe meanes they ſhould ſee no fruit of them, nor hope of preuailing. But be more importunate, urging all their ſtrongeſt reaſons upon him.

Now when they have uſed all theſe meanes, though they ſhould ſee no fruit nor hope to prevaile: yet are they never to leave off their crying unto the Lord, nor of uſing all the favour that they have with his Majeſtie. They are now above all former times, as *Abraham* and *Iacob*, to get more and more within the Lord, and even (as it were) to inforce him, and ſtay his hand, urging all their ſtrongeſt reaſons over and over, as his deareſt ſervants in ſuch caſe have beene wont to doe. To crie unto him for the infinitneſſe of his mercie, pitie and compaſſion; for his glory, and for all his promiſes made to the faithfull prayers of his ſervants; for his Covenant made with them, his love to his poore children that have not denied his name, his tender ones; the inſulting and blaſphemies of the Lords enemies, if ever he ſhould leave us up unto their bloudie crueltie: ſo to binde his hands, to ſtop the vengeance, and to ſtay if it be poſſible his denuntiations, and aſſwage his diſpleaſure, as oft times *Moſes* did.

Application to our ſelves, who ſucceed in the place of the Prophets.

To returne unto our owne hearts and conſciences, even to the ſoule of every one of us, who have beene called of the Lord to ſucceed in the place of *Ezekiel* and other of his faithfull Prophets, and to be as they were for his people towards his Majeſty, and for his Majeſtie towards his people.

Whether we have the ſame affections. Our ſinnes are as great, as theirs, all circumſtances conſidered.

Doe we finde this ſame affection, that it hath beene and is in us, as it was in them? We cannot deny it, but that the Lord hath made it moſt evident unto all of us, that are not ſtarke blinde, unleſſe we will winke with our eyes, that our ſinnes (ſo farre as I can conceive) are as great as theirs every way, when we conſider that glorious light of the Goſpell wherein we live (as hath beene ſhewed) in regard whereof, all that light which they enjoyed was but as the light of the Moone, or a light ſhining in a darke place, compared with the brightneſſe of the Sunne: and much more when we remember how hee hath multiplied his mercies with ſuch and ſo many ſenſible warnings and threatnings for our ſinnes, and withall ſuch incredible deliverances. Neither can we doubt, but that he is as holy and juſt, and therefore as ſevere now, againſt impenitent ſinners, as ever he was heretofore; and much more all theſe things being well weighed together.

And therefore Gods anger muſt needs be as great and as evidently revealed.

And

And therefore this seemes to be as visible to us hereby, as ever it was to those Prophets, that his plagues and judgements both spirituall and bodily, as they have begun, so they are threatned to rush upon us more dreadfully then ever before. And although they were but only spiritual plagues which were threatned, yet were these most of all to be feared, sith that these will prove most terrible in the end. Now then doe our consciences beare us witnesse that we have thus mourned, that we doe daily fall upon our faces before his Holinesse with *Ezekiel.* to make our intercession and to helpe to make an attonement? Have we both heretofore, and doe we still every one in our places and standings call upon all to seeke the face of the Lord, to meet him with intreatie of peace in all the holy meanes mentioned, and what others the Lord hath made knowne unto us? If it be so, then is it like, that we can every one of us shew these affections out of our owne particular labours and fruits, within the compasse of our callings, in some humiliation, and repentance or mourning of our people for their sinnes, and the inquitie of our age, or at least some earnest endevour after the same. But alas, what are become of our sorrowfull and melting hearts? our sighes and teares for our sinnes? Nay, what is become of those solemne assemblies wherein Gods people were wont to be so humbled as *Israel*, in fasting, weeping, mourning, and confessing of our sinnes, whensoever the Lord smit us by the pestilence, dearth and famine, or threatned us by the bloudie enemie, or shewed any other manifest signes of his displeasure against us? Hath he not as visibly declared his anger even of late times, as ever in any of those daies?

To goe no further but even to that last extreame dearth of all things which so long continued upon us. Have we had any true sense or feeling of it, or of the miseries of many of our brethren in it? How it utterly consumed the substance of many a one, who are pretious unto the Lord? How it enforced them to poure out their sighes and teares before his Majestie, partly for their owne grievous distresse, and much more to see the want of pitie and compassion in the mightie men of the Land, who by their oppressions of their poore tenants, have beene the cause of all this to maintaine pride, riot and all excesse in sinne, to provoke

And his judgements rushing on us as dreadfull.

Whether we doe so fall on our faces.

Calling on all to meet the Lord in the meanes made knowne unto us.

Whether we can shew our affections out of our labours.

Our sorrowfull hearts gone.

So our wonted humiliations, in pestilence, dearth, and other signes of Gods anger.

What we have done for the visible prints of Gods anger, as in the long dearth. About *Anno* 1608. and before.

The extremitie of it.

Causing the poore to poure out their sighes before the Lord.

Cause of all.

provoke the eyes of his Holineſſe? Have we had any ſenſe of their fearefull temptations; their conflicts betweene faith and unbeleefe; the troubles and afflictions of their conſciences for all their impatience and their lacke of faith and holy confidence, to rely themſelves wholly upon the Lords fatherly providence, in all their wants and miſeries? Or have we had any true commiſeration of the lamentable and deſperate eſtate of theſe unmercifull oppreſſors, and of our ſinfull Land for them? Who becauſe they ſtill eſcape the vengeance of the Lord, and are commonly inriched by the ſpoiles of the poore, doe grow daily in their ſenſleſſe ſecuritie, and in all the ſinnes of Sodome, in pride, fulneſſe of bread, abundance of idleneſſe, unmercifulneſſe, contempt of all admonition and warning; and finally, doe wallow in all ſenſualitie, whereby they fat up themſelves againſt the day of ſlaughter? Have we yet any underſtanding wrought in vs, why the Lord hath ſo dealt with ſome of his owne faithfull ſervants, who though by his mercie they have had better meanes than many other of their poore brethren, and although they have laboured day and night to maintaine themſelves and families, yet might have periſhed by lacke of bread, both they and theirs, if he in his moſt fatherly and tender love had not provided extraordinarily for them: even as he did for the Patriarkes and Prophets, for his people in the wilderneſſe, for the poore widowes, the Diſciples and Apoſtles? Why hath he done this, even amongſt his faithfull ones; but that they ſhould have a more deepe feeling of his terrible judgement, and of the lamentable eſtates of the poore; of the hardneſſe and ſenſeleſneſſe of the hearts of the great ones; and ſo to helpe to proclaime his anger to all ſtates and degrees, unleſſe we ſpeedily meet him with intreatie of peace: that if he begin thus grievouſly at his owne houſe, all may know what remaines for all other, unleſſe we pacifie him forthwith by unfained repentance.

Whether we have had any ſenſe of the temptations of our poore brethren.

Or of the deſperate eſtate of our unmerciſull oppreſſors.

Or why God hath ſo tried many of his faithfull ſervants.

To worke in them more ſenſe of his judgement, and more feeling of the miſeries of the poore.

To helpe to proclaime his anger, when he begins ſo at his owne houſe.

Are not theſe then the daies wherein the Lord cals us all to faſting and weeping for our ſinnes? If ever the daies of the abounding of all iniquitie, in ſuch a ſhining light of the Goſpell, and of the blaſphemies of the Lords enemies againſt his Majeſtie, his word and ſervants, like the blaſphemies of *Goliah*, *Senacherib*, and *Rabſakey* (witneſſe many of their libels, not to

That theſe are the daies of mourning, if the daies of ſo many ſignes of Gods anger, and the blaſphemies of Gods enemies be they.

Witneſſe that odious Libell and many others.

to be uttered but spred before the Lord) with all other signes and tokens of Gods anger kindled for the sinnes of his people, were daies of mourning and humiliation, then are these they! These, these are those daies wherein the Lord hath long called loud upon the whole Nation, and on every particular partie, thus to humble our selves, to seeke by all possible meanes to pacifie and to appease him, before his decree come forth, and be executed upon us, and that there be no remedie. Did not our hearts acknowledge this specially, besides all former times, in that so lamentable a harvest in many parts of our Nation, wherein the very heavens themselves did seeme to weepe over us, bewailing our senselesnesse; or rather to have beene armed to take vengeance upon us, in depriving us utterly of all the fruits of the earth which the Lord had provided for us in such abundance? Did not he then seeme sensibly to plucke the very bread and drinke from our mouthes; (that which all the wealthy had so abused to all outragious excesse in such drunkennesse and surfetting, as this Land had hardly ever heard of before) and that whereof now the poorer sort began to secure themselves, that surely they should have plenty enough, for all their daies of *scarcitie*? It is good for us to recall these things, and at length to make some use of them, amongst other our fore-warnings. What heart mourned not to see in what a pitifull case the corne stood, ready either to rot upon the ground, or to be made utterly unfit for the sustenance of man, or else altogether lost before there could be hope to get it into the barne? Did it not generally sprit in the shooks, losing thereby both strength and fitnesse of good nourishment, leaving little but the huske for the substance of man? As it for the present caused many hundred thousands to crie unto the Lord to looke downe from heaven in mercy, and to stay his hand; so had it not much more made such a crie as never was heard of us before, nor almost in the Church of God, if he had not thought upon us, at that very instant when he did, restraining that so dreadfull a raine, and if in his wrath he had not yet once againe thus thought on mercie?

The dolefull harvest. *Anno* 1609.

Ioel 1. 5.

But you will say we might have had supplies from Denmarke and those other Countries, as formerly we have had. Alas what supplies could possibly have beene had so suddenly, and chiefly so

Objection of supply answered.

so neere winter, from those parts? Besides that, (although wee are to magnifie the gratious providence of the Lord so feeding us from thence) doth not yet the whole Land feele the smart thereof? And how should all the poorer sort have endured the prices, being almost utterly impoverished before through the long dearths upon them? Had not therefore the Lord thought on us in that instant, we may well thinke that the cry and desolation of the Powder-treason could hardly have beene much more terrible, (I speake of the outward desolation only) though wee then thought, that never the like calamity could have come upon a people. For what are all the evils of sword or pestilence usually, if they be compared unto famine? These consume in a moment in respect; this by lingring makes the misery unspeakable. What heart was there, that for the present, while the corne stood in that pitifull case, did not in a naturall feare and compassion send up some sighes to God, though otherwise never so flintie and prophane? Who was there then having but the least sparke of grace, or any feeling left, who did not either say, or thinke in his soule, that it was full time for us all, to betake our selves to fasting and prayer, and that the Lord did in that fearefull judgement call us thereunto? Who, having any sense, did not thus wish and crie in his heart, as the Prophet *Ioel*, in the very same case of imminent destruction by a dreadfull famine, saying, *Sanctifie a fast, call a solemne assembly; gather the Elders and all the inhabitants of the Land, unto the house of God, and cry unto the Lord, Alas for the day, the day of the Lord is at hand, and it commeth as a destruction from the Almightie*; when we saw the fields readie to be wasted, the Land mourning, the corne destroyed, as that Prophet speaketh. Call your hearts and thoughts unto remembrance; they are still fresh before the Lord. And notwithstanding all that mercie and readinesse of our God, to deliver us when we cried unto him, (to shew us what he would doe for us, if we would humble our selves indeed, and seeke him in order as he hath appointed) did he not yet leave most notable prints of his displeasure, that in most places there might be just cause to keepe remembrance as well of his anger, as of his mercie, almost in every peece of bread, for all that yeere after? And why left he such a memoriall behind? Surely either to awake

Weigh well that which followeth.

Ioel 1.14.15.

Ibel 1.10.

wake and rouze us hereby, chiefly our drunkards and belly-gods to cause even them to turne with weeping unto the Lord from their sinne, or else henceforth to leave us utterly without excuse. Yet doe wee not still remaine as void of sense of any such matter, as ever we did before, or rather much more? Whilest the judgement was upon us, then it was the Lord; for then every one cried unto him to stay that dreadfull raine, and then it was full time to fast and to pray; the Lord then for that time called us thereunto, by that evident token of his wrath: but since that he hath saved us from that death, and deferred the execution of his judgement at our cries, it was no more hee, it was but a chance. There is now no more anger or perill towards us, nor any more mourning for sinne, or turning to be spoken of, but jollity and mirth every where, though our sinnes provoking it be every way increased.

Yet we still remaine as senseless as ever.

All now forgotten.

Hath not the Lord now as just cause to complaine of us for this, as ever he had to complaine of Iudah by the Prophet *Esay*, and to say thus of us; *In that day (of the dolefull harvest and dreadfull raine, with many other tokens of my anger both before and then present) did I call unto weeping and mourning. And behold yet joy and gladnesse, jollity, mirth, eating flesh and drinking wine: all sorts giving themselves to all excesse and fleshly lusts, every one as he hath wherewithall to doe it: scorning at all signes and tokens of my displeasure, and at all my warning, saying thus in effect as they, Let us eat and drinke, for to morrow we shall die.* Must not all our hearts that have any true sense of our estate, needs tremble, knowing that this is in the eares of the Lord of Hoasts? And also for that fearefull denunciation of the Lord in that place, against this sinne aboue all other: *Surely* (saith God) *this iniquitie shall not be purged from you, untill you die*: untill that my vengeance threatned be executed upon you. This we cannot deny to be the voice and denunciation of the Lord; and as surely to be executed upon us, as ever it was upon Iudah, for not yeelding and humbling our selves, when he hath so oft and so long called in such evident manner, but doing the cleane contrarie. For if euer he called to Iudah or to any other Nation to fasting and prayer, to weeping and mourning for their sins and judgements at hand, he then undoubtedly called herein, and doth still call

The Lords complaint and threatning against us for this one sinne added to all before.

Esay 22. 12, 13.

Esay 22. 14.

Joel 1. 14, 15.

If ever God called unto Iudah so, then he hath and doth so unto us.

He needeth no other witneſſe but our owne conſciences.

call unto us. He needeth no further witneſſe but every mans owne heart and conſcience. They ſhall be enough, as at the day of the moſt righteous execution of his vengeance, each heart will acknowledge, unleſſe we prevent it in time. To omit the moſt terrible thunder and tempeſts in many places at that time, which ſo ſmit the hearts of men for the preſent, which made the very earth to tremble, with the dreadfull lightning and the heavie judgements that followed thereupon. And alſo that direfull ſnow, the wofull drought, when the heavens were as iron, the earth as braſſe, which cauſed the cattell to mourne for lacke of paſture, and after which ſo many of them periſhed for want of food; and to be briefe, that no one yeere, as I take it, hath paſſed ſince, without ſome manifeſt threatning or token of Gods diſpleaſure, as hath beene declared before: and yet we remaine ſtill more void of feeling, and more hardened in our ſinnes.

Concluſion.

And thus have we ſeene herein, as in the former, what preſent need all the people of the Lord have to weepe and crie for pardon of that deadneſſe of ſpirit, that hath beene ſo generally upon the Lords Meſſengers, that in ſeeing his anger, wee have not beene ſo tenderly affected, as his faithfull ſervants have been wont to be, for the ſaving of his people, nor ſo earneſt to draw all to the meanes of meeting him, and preventing the execution of his decree. And finally, what juſt cauſe there is, for all Gods meſſengers to ſtirre up theſe affections; and henceforth to have more commiſeration of his poore people, if ever we will approve our ſelves his faithfull ſervants and called of him; or would finde any mercy or hiding place under his wing in the day of his vengeance: or laſtly, if we would make ſure to ſave our ſelves, and helpe to preſerve this our deare Nation from his wrath, leſt it fall upon us ſuddenly, and utterly overwhelme us of a ſudden.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

The ſinnes of a people may come to be ſo hainous, as that the Lord will not be pacified at the private prayers of his deareſt ſervants. Alſo when that time is; and what cauſe we have thereupon to watch and to pray continually.

VERSE 9. *Then ſaid he unto me, The iniquitie of the houſe of Iſrael and Iudah is exceeding great, and the land is full of bloud, and the Citie full of perverſeneſſe; for they ſay the Lord hath forſaken the earth, and the Lord ſeeth not.* 10. *And as for me alſo, mine eye ſhall not ſpare, neither will I have pitie, but I will recompence their way upon their head.*

IN theſe two verſes are contained the anſwer of the Lord, which he makes unto the Prophet, being fallen as *Abraham*, upon his face, crying unto his Majeſty, and uſing all vehement interceſſion to pacifie his wrath, and urging all his ſtrongeſt reaſons, whereby to ſtay the Lords hand. This anſwer conſiſts of two parts.

The anſwer of the Lord unto the Prophet; conſiſting

1. Of a full reſolution that he will not ſpare them.
2. The reaſons why he will not ſpare them.
   1. For the greatneſſe of their ſinne.
   2. That their Citie was full of perverſneſſe, falling away more and more.
   3. The reaſon of all; for that

First, a full reſolution in the Lord that he will not ſpare them, nor be moved any thing at the interceſſion of the Prophet, neither yet that his eye ſhould take any pitie; but that he will recompence their waies upon their owne heads, he will now deale with them, as they had dealt with him before. And this is in the tenth verſe.

Secondly, the cauſe why he would not ſpare them, becauſe the iniquitie of the houſe of Iſrael and Iudah was exceeding great, which appeares in two things chiefly. 1. That their Land was full of bloud. 2. That their very Citie Ieruſalem, which in the common corruption ought yet to have retained more conſcience and integritie, and to have beene humbled before the Lord at his threatnings, it alſo became full of perverſneſſe and corrupt judgement, and fell away daily more and more. Laſtly followeth the reaſon of all this their iniquitie, thus increaſing; for

they growed to a generall Atheiſme, to thinke that the Lord ſaw them not, nor yet regarded them.

for that they ſaid, That the Lord had forſaken the earth; he ſaw them not, it was no matter what they did, nor how they lived. They were many of them become ſtarke Atheiſts, all their waies and courſes proclaimed ſo much before the world, that they ſaid in their hearts that there was no God. Others of the better began to thinke and that generally, that things came to paſſe by chance and fortune, or to all alike: and that there was no ſuch profit in ſerving God; God had no ſuch reſpect or care of any, no not of the godlieſt, as the Prophets ſpake of: the caſe of ſuch becomming the worſt of all others. This is the ſumme of the words.

In the Lords reſolution that he will not ſpare, and the reaſons of it, he gives us to conſider theſe two things. 1. That the ſinne of his owne people may be ſo exceeding great, as that hee will not be appeaſed, nor ſuffer his hand to be ſtayed any longer, no not at the prayers of his moſt faithfull ſervants; as it was in this place. 2. That hereby we may know when that time is, and when the ſinne is come to that height.

The ſin of the Lords owne people may be ſo hainous, as that he will not ſpare them, no not at the prayers of his deareſt ſervants. *Ezek.* 9. 8. *Ierem.* 15. 1.

For the firſt, That the ſinne may be ſo hainous, even the ſinne of his owne people, is moſt evident in this place; where hee gives the Prophet a flat deniall, and only becauſe their ſinne was ſo exceeding great, and that they were ſo perverſe. And tels him plainly, that notwithſtanding his interceſſion and earneſtneſſe, his falling upon his face and crying unto him, yet he will not ſpare them, his eye ſhall not pitie them becauſe hereof. The very ſame we may ſee in the fifteenth of *Ieremie*, at the firſt verſe, where the Lord tels *Ieremie*, in the ſame caſe, That though *Moſes* and *Samuel* ſtood before him, yet his affection could not be towards this people, to deliver them from this judgement of this Captivitie: but hee would caſt them out of his ſight. Wherein the Lord would have all the world to take notice, that though firſt this be true, That the very preſence of Gods deare ſervants may doe exceeding much to preſerve his people, as the preſence of *Noah* and *Lot* did thoſe wicked men whileſt they remained amongſt them: And ſecondly, albeit as we have heard, the fervent prayers of his are of ſuch power, as that they are able to overthrow and deſtroy the proudeſt enemies, and to ſmite the earth with plagues as oft as they will,

Though the very preſence of them may doe exceeding much. And their praiers able to prevaile wonderfully.

like

like as the Lord ſpeaketh; yea to make the Sunne to ſtand ſtill, to open and to ſhut the heaven; and very long and oft, to preſerve the Iſland, and even after a ſort to tie the Lords hands from deſtroying his people, as the Lord ſaith to *Moſes*; *Let me alone that I may deſtroy them at once*; ſpeaking as if *Moſes* held his hand, that he ſhould not deſtroy them: And although ſo long as the vengeance is ſtayed, it be kept off chiefly by them, and for his great names ſake; yet the ſinnes may come to that height, that though *Moſes* and *Samuel* were alive againe, to intreat for them, he would not ſpare them, ſo continuing in their impenitencie. Alſo in the fourteenth of this Prophecie, the Lord repeats it over and over for more certaintie, That though *Noah*, *Iob* and *Daniel* were amongſt them, three as holy men, and who might doe as much with God, as ever any men that lived upon the earth, yet they ſhould deliver neither ſonne nor daughter, they ſhould but only deliver their owne ſoules by their righteouſneſſe. So that it is moſt cleare, that the iniquitie of Gods owne people may be ſo great, and the provocation ſo hainous, that they continuing impenitent, the Lord will not be moved to ſpare any longer, no not at the moſt earneſt intreatie of thoſe men, at whoſe prayers and by whoſe preſence he hath beene wont to ſpare them formerly: nor that they ſhall be able to ſave any more but even their owne ſoules. The truth hereof theſe denunciations doe plainly verifie, and alſo this fearefull example, that neither the cries of *Ieremie*, nor *Ezekiel*, nor *Daniel*, nor of all other the Prophets and holy ſervants of God that then lived, (though undoubtedly they were very many, as was ſhewed before in the marking of the mourners) could ſave them from this moſt miſerable Captivitie. So likewiſe that dreadfulleſt enſample of their laſt and utter deſolation in the daies of the Goſpell, ſo forewarned and lamented by our Saviour; and finally, all thoſe places from whence hee hath ſince removed his candle-ſticke, by the bloudie enemie, or any way left them into their cruell hands, doe fully witneſſe.

Apoc. 11. 9. *Ioſ.* 10. 12, 13. *Iob* 22. 30. *Exod.* 32. 10.

Ezek. 14. 14. 16. 18. 20. Yet that he will not heare *Noah Iob* and *Daniel*, though they were amongſt them.

But here a queſtion is to be anſwered, moſt pertinent to this purpoſe, whether, if ſuch a people doe generally turne unto the Lord, and humble themſelves in ſuch ſort as hee hath comman-

Queſt. 1. Whether the Lord will not

ever ſpare upon a generall humiliation and repentance rightly performed.

commanded, and as his people have beene wont at ſuch times, when he hath ſhewed his approbation and acceptance by ſparing them (as we have ſeene the manner in the former Chapter) whether, I ſay, the Lord will not then be mercifull and ſpare them, although he will not doe it at the ſecret and private cries of his moſt beloved ſervants, nor at all the meanes that they can uſe to appeaſe his wrath.

Anſw. If a people humble themſelves generally and turne, the Lord will turne from his fierce wrath.

Anſw. To this the Lord ſeemeth to anſwer directly, and to give a moſt comfortable reſolution; That if a people doe ſo turne and humble themſelves, the Lord alſo he will ſpare and will not deſtroy them, though his vengeance be even now readie to be powred downe upon them.

Proofes.

Hereof there ſeeme to be foure moſt evident proofes, amongſt others, and of which there can be no doubt.

1. The Lords generall promiſe. *Ierem.* 18.7.

1. The firſt is a generall promiſe of the Lord in this very caſe; and it is made to any people or Nation whatſoever, although they were not the Lords people, in the eighteenth of *Ieremie*, where the Lord ſaith, *That he will ſpeake ſuddenly againſt a Nation, or againſt a kingdome, to plucke it up, and to root it out, and to deſtroy it*, [that is, he will denounce his vengeance againſt a kingdome or Nation to deſtroy it ſuddenly] yet he ſaith, *That if that Nation againſt whom he hath pronounced* [that vengeance] *doth turne from the wickedneſſe, he will alſo repent of the plague that he thought to bring upon them*, [that is, that hee will ſpare and not deſtroy them.]

Verſe 8.

2. The promiſe made to *Salomon* for his people. 2 *Chron.* 7. 12, 13, 14.

2. The ſecond is that gratious promiſe made unto *Salomon* for the Church of God, at the dedication of the Temple; where the Lord appearing to *Salomon*, thus ſpeakes unto him, without limitation of ſinnes or of time: *If* (ſaith he) *I ſhut the heaven, that there be no raine, or if I command the graſhopper to devoure the Land, or if I ſend peſtilence among my people, if my people among whom my name is called upon doe humble themſelves, and pray and ſeeke my preſence, and turne from their wicked waies, then will I heare in heaven, and be mercifull to their ſinne, and heale their Land.*

3. The Lord ſeeking to bring them by *Ieremie* to this

3. A third proofe is, a notable inſtance, which the Lord gives of the riches of his mercie, before this terrible Captivitie, concerning which he had thus denounced unto *Ezekiel*, that

no

no private interceſſion ſhould ſerve; yet he bids *Ieremie*, when he was ſhut up in priſon, ſo as he could not ſpeake unto them, *That he ſhould take a roule* [*viz.* ſuch a one as wherein they were wont to write] *and to write therein all the words which hee had ſpoken unto him againſt Iſrael, and againſt Iudah, from the day that hee had ſpoken unto him, even from the daies of Ioſiah unto that day*; that was, from the firſt time that God ſpake unto him, *viz.* in the thirteenth yeere of *Ioſiah*. And he gives this reaſon, why he would have him to doe this: *It may be*, ſaith the Lord, *that the houſe of Iudah will heare of all the evill which I have determined to doe unto them, that they may returne every man from his evill way, that I may forgive their iniquitie and their ſinnes*. And after *Ieremie* commands *Baruch, that he ſhould goe in his place, and reade the roule in the audience of all the people, in the Lords houſe, upon the faſting day; and that he ſhould reade it alſo in the hearing of all Iudah, that came out of all their Cities*. And gives likewiſe this reaſon; *It may be* (ſaith hee) *that they will pray before the Lord, and every one returne from his evill way, ſeeing great is the anger and wrath, that the Lord hath declared againſt this people*. Wherein the Lord ſheweth clearely, that if yet even at this time, when his wrath was at the greateſt, they would have humbled themſelves in ſuch ſort as hee required, and as his people were wont to doe, when he pardoned their ſinne, he would even yet have ſpared them. They indeed kept a publike faſt at this time, but not in that manner which the Lord had appointed and required; they repented not, they turned not from their evill way as the people of Ninivie did. They would amend nothing of all that God had warned them of by *Ieremie*, and other his Prophets. Their hearts were not ſoundly touched, as they ſhould have beene, to have powred out *buckets of teares*, as the people did in their faſt in the daies of *Samuel*. They were a little moved with that word of the Lord, which *Ieremie* had ſent them, and feared a little, but the King and his ſervants rejecting it, and not fearing any thing, the people did ſo likewiſe, following their enſample. And therefore this more encreaſed the wrath, and prepared the way for the vengeance, leaving them utterly without excuſe, for the holy Ghoſt ſaith, *that when Iehudi had read three or foure ſides of that Prophecie* of

humiliation by writing, when he could not by preaching, to the end he might ſpare them.

Ezek. 36. 2, 3, 6, 7
Ierem. 1. 1, 2.
Ierem. 36. 1, 2, 3.

Verſ. 6.

Verſ. 7.

Verſe 9.

How publike faſts may be made uneffectuall to ſave, viz. when men turne not from their evill way, or are not ſoundly humbled, as, Jerem. 36.

Verſe 9.
Verſ. 24.
1 *Sam.* 7. 6.
Jerem. 36. 16.
Verſ. 14.

Verſ. 23.

of Ieremie before the King, that the King tooke it and cut it with a pen-knife, and cast it into the fire, untill it was consumed. And the Lord addeth this, That yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the King, nor any of his servants, that heard all these words. To shew that this was an evident token and fore-runner of the vengeance of the Lord, and that his wrath was on them to the uttermost, and that he had determined their destruction, because they could not be afraid notwithstanding all this, and all other the means, which the Lord had used to bring them to repentance. The King of Ninivie and his Nobles whom the Lord determined to spare, doe cleane contrarily, give ensample and commandement by proclamation, that all should humble themselves, turning from their evill waies, and all the people followed, and God spared them, repenting of the evill that he had said he would doe unto them, though their sinne was never so hainous. This example evidently evicts, that if by any meanes they could have beene brought to have humbled themselves, and have turned to the Lord, hee would have spared them, notwithstanding all his threatenings and wrath so kindled.

Vers. 24.

The contrary in Ninivie repenting and turning. Jon. 3.6,7,10. Vers. 8.

Vers. 10.

4 The fourth reason is this, because we have not so much as one ensample in all the Booke of God, wherein the people did humble themselves in sinceritie, in any measure, according to the ordinance and word of the Lord, but he did ever pardon and deliver them from the temporall judgement threatned to them, and was reconciled or appeased for the present. This he hath done to shew both the faithfulnesse of his promises, and also the riches of his mercie, and how readie he is to forgive his people, notwithstanding all his threatnings, which are but conditionall, except they repent: and also that hee hath no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turne from his way and live, and therefore deviseth meanes for their preservation, as the woman of Tekoa speaketh to *David*. Therefore he proclaimes it to all the world, in the 33. of *Ezekiel*, and and cries unto all such; *As I live, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that he turne from his way and live. Turne you, turne you from your evill way, for why will ye die, oh ye house of Israel!* And in the eighteenth of *Ezekiel*, *Returne therefore, and*

4. We have no one example to the contrary, but all witnessing hereunto. *2 Chro. 7.13,14.*

Jerem. 18.8.

Ezek. 18.21,22.

Ezek. 33.11. *2 Sam. 14.14.* The Lord proclaimes his mercie herein to al the world. *Ezek. 33.11.* *Ezek. 18.33.*

cause

cauſe others to returne from all your tranſgreſſions, ſo iniquitie ſhall not be your deſtruction. And *caſt away from you all your tranſgreſſions, and make you a new heart and a new ſpirit, for why will ye die, oh yee houſe of Iſrael? for I deſire not the death of him that dieth ſaith the Lord; cauſe therefore one another to returne, and live ye.* So that by all theſe places, it appeareth evidently, ſo farre as I am able to conceive, that the Lord will ever ſpare, if he vouchſafe hearts to his people ſo to humble themſelves generally, to ſeeke his face and turne unto him.

Verſ. 31.

Verſ. 32.

Yea, which is more then this: If a people ſeeing his anger kindled, all of them that feare his name doe humble themſelves, though it be but in ſecret, and doe ſeeke him, yet there is much aſſurance of mercy and deliverance from the Lord, as we ſee againſt the plot of *Haman*: Beſides that the Lord doth then call on them to ſeeke him, when all the reſt doe faile. The reaſon alſo is moſt cleare: becauſe all the Lords people compaſſing him about as an armie, and all his deare children thus crying vnto him together, muſt needs prevaile exceeding much; to cauſe the very bowels of the Lord to erne over his tender ones, to remember his promiſe made unto them, and to ſave them.

Thought it be but the ſervants of God humbling themſelves, if generally, though ſeverally and in private at the ſame time: as in the daies of *Heſter*.

Zeph. 2. 2, 3.

Ezek 22. 30.

Ieremi. 5. 1.

If one *Moſes* alone can doe ſo much, and if God call for one man, and ſay, *if he found a man*, a man in reſpect, he would ſpare his people; how much more then when multitudes of the ſame heart and affections as *Moſes* was, ſhall at the ſame inſtant ſtep into the breach, and offer a holy violence unto the Lord, by ſtaying his hands from deſtroying his people. God hath thus farre forth made his word good unto us (unto this day) in the unſpeakable riches of his mercie, and his readineſſe to ſpare, with his unwillingneſſe to deſtroy his people.

If one *Moſes* alone may doe ſo much, how much more ſo many?

Obiect. But here it may be ſaid, doth not the Lord by *Zephany* bid this people to *gather themſelves before the decree come forth, and then they become as chaffe that paſſeth away.* By which words it ſeemeth, that if the decree be once gone forth from the Lord, then it is too late, and the Lord will ſhew no more mercy.

Obiect. 1.

Zeph. 2. 1.

If the Lords decree be once come forth, it is too late.

Anſw. For anſwer to this feare, the words according to the originall, are thus: *Before the decree bring forth*, that is, before it bring forth the execution: or before the Lord execute his decree

Anſw.

The meaning is, before the execution of

the decree come, or before the decree bring forth the execution.

decree and threatning, as the moſt learned doe expound it, and as all the words following make it plaine: *viz. Before yee be as chaffe that paſſeth away, and before the fierce wrath of the Lord come upon you, and before the day of the Lords anger come upon you.* By all which words the holy Ghoſt doth moſt evidently intimate, that at any time before the terrible execution of Gods dreadfull wrath and vengeance, it may be either altogether prevented, or much mitigated, by ſuch a gathering together, and ſuch a generall ſifting of our hearts before the Lord. And therefore we are ever to hope this, that ſo long as the Lord gives and continues to a people hearts to ſeeke generally to pacifie him, in the right meanes which he hath appointed thereunto, ſo long he intends the ſparing and ſaving of that people; and that ſo long the decree is not yet forth ſo farre, but it may be ſtill ſuſpended or recalled.

Obſerv. So long as God gives a people hearts to uſe the right meanes to pacifie him, ſo long he will be appeaſed.

Object. 2. But it may be replied, Doe we not ſee the contrary in *David*, who though he humble himſelfe at the denunciation of Gods anger by the Prophet *Nathan*, yet all the judgements threatned doe come upon him. Although the Lord doe pardon his ſinne, and ſave him from the eternall wrath, yet hee ſmites him with his temporall ſcourges, for the terror of others.

David feeles the temporall ſcourges, notwithſtanding his unfained repentance. 2 *Sam.* 12. 11.

Anſw. Howſoever it is true that the Lord doth inflict upon him ſundrie of thoſe judgements denounced by the Prophet, yet upon his firſt unfained acknowledgement, ſaying, *I have ſinned*, the Prophet immediatly gives him this comfort from the Lord, that *the Lord had put away his ſin, he ſhould not die*: That is, he ſhould not be cut off and deſtroyed utterly, as he had deſerved. And this was indeed the chiefeſt outward chaſtiſement, which hee in the Parable had acknowledged himſelfe worthie of, and had given ſentence of himſelfe that he was the childe of death: and ſo the Prophet tels him, though he died not, yet his *childe ſhould ſurely die*; he would ſmite him in that by taking the childe from him, *becauſe he made the enemies of God to blaſpheme.* So that the Lord did deliver him from that which was the chiefe, and did no doubt much mitigate the reſt: although becauſe he had cauſed Gods enemies to blaſpheme, the hand of the Lord was never utterly removed from him. But in another place he ſaith plainly, that in a grievous affliction, wherein he was and

Anſw. The Lord ſaved him from death, which was the chiefeſt outward judgement, and mitigated the reſt. 2 *Sam.* 12. 13. 2 *Sam.* 12. 5.

Pſal. 32. 3. 5.

could

could finde no comfort, though *he roared all the day*, yet upon his humble confeſſion and unfained humiliation, *the Lord forgave him the puniſhment of his ſinne.*

Pſa. 32. 3, 5, 6.

The like we may ſee in the Lords proceedings ordinarily, that howſoever he have ſmitten his people with leſſe judgements for their ſins, yet upon their true humiliations he hath ever delivered them from the principall evils threatned: notwithſtanding that he hath ſmitten them ſome way, that they might ſenſibly ſee his anger and their deſerving. As at the golden calfe, he denounced that though at the interceſſion of *Moſes*, he did ſpare and not deſtroy them, yet *in the day of his viſitation he would ſurely viſit them.* This our owne eyes have ſeene in all our great deliverances, how oft he hath ſaved us from the bloudy enemie, which was the heavieſt plague, yet after every one of our deliverances he hath uſually ſmitten us with ſome other judgements, to make us to feele his hand, and to ſee from what he hath ſaved us. As ſmiting us by ſtrange and ſudden overflowing of waters in the yeere eighty eight, immediatly after our deliverance, ſaving us from the terrible invading and overrunning of the enemie, and of the overflowing of our land in bloud. And alſo ſince our ſo miraculous a deliverance from our ſo long feared day, by bringing in our King in ſuch a peace; how he hath purſued us by peſtilence and mortalitie ſo long continued, as never formerly was knowne in this nation, ſo farre as I can finde; the ſword of the deſtroying Angell being ſtretched forth againſt us for ſo many yeeres together. And finally, after our preſervation and plucking out from the fiery furnace, he viſited us for ſundry yeeres by a grievous dearth of all things: Firſt, through the vehemency of the ſtrange and unwonted froſt; and continued partly by that dreadfull raine in that doleſull harveſt, wherein he threatned to take away all utterly, but principally by the pride, exceſſe and unmercifulneſſe of the wealthier ſort. To omit all thoſe dreadfull inundations the like whereunto our nation hath not knowne heretofore, and alſo that late direfull ſnow and pitifull drought, which were the periſhing of multitudes of the cattell of the land, and the utter undoing of ſo many of the poorer ſort; and that every yeere hath and doth ſtill commonly bring forth ſome new judgement, or one matter of feare & mourning

The Lord hath beene wont ordinarily to inflict ſome leſſer judgement; when the humiliation hath not beene unfained, though he ſaved his people from the greater. *Exod.* 32. 27, 35. As for the golden calfe. Our owne experience.

ning or other, which may justly denounce the greatest of all to be yet behinde, unlesse it be prevented by our unfained repentance.

Conclusion. And thus have we answered these doubts, and seene clearely that the sinnes of Gods owne people may be so great, as that he will not spare for the presence, nor at the cries of his dearest servants, nor by any meanes in all the world, but by a generall humiliation and turning of all sorts unto him.

Quest. 2. When the time is, that the Lord will not spare his people any longer, no not at the private praiers of his dearest servants.

Now it remaineth that we come to the second maine point, to search out the time when it is, that the Lord will not spare his people any longer, no not at the most instant supplications and cries of his faithfullest servants. This we cannot better behold, than in this same president; and in these reasons which the Lord giveth the Prophet, why he will not now spare Iudah any longer. The first whereof is this: *Because the iniquitie of the house of Israel was so exceeding great*: as we have seene it, in the severall abominations before. They had now filled up the measure of their sinnes. Out of which God would have us to understand thus much; this being registred for us.

That when the sinne of a people professing the name and true religion of the Lord, is come to such a height, as the sinne of this people was, that then is the time that all have just cause to feare, that he will spare no longer: no not for the presence or at the cries of his most beloved servants. They shall then save no moe but their owne soules. But when a people hath filled up the measure of their sinnes so farre, then may they expect the full viols of the Lords wrath to be poured downe upon their heads, and the measure of their plagues to be made proportionall. When the harvest is thus ripe, then are they to looke for the seekle of the Lord to be thrust in to reape downe all; then have they just cause to feare and tremble, and then is it full time to seeke to prevent it. The neerer also is it to be deemed to be, and as it were at the doores, by how much the Lord hath used moe and stronger meanes, to reclaime his people that he might spare them, and seemed even to exceed himselfe in mercy, in multiplying his lesser corrections, forewarnings, with deliverances and blessings.

Ezek.14.14.

Apoc.14.15.

Ezek.9. Three speciall signes thereof.

Obiect. But are there no more speciall meanes to know when the sinne of a people are become so great?

Answ.

Anſw. The Lord hath here ſet downe three ſignes, to give warning to all hereby, to the end to leave all thoſe more without excuſe, with whom nothing at all will prevaile. The firſt whereof is, when the land of a people profeſſing the true religion of the Lord, as *Iudah* now did, and whom he hath by all meanes ſo convinced, is full of bloud; that is, when it is preſently or hath beene extremely defiled with bloud, (unrepented of and not purged) as theirs was at this time. The ſecond is, when it is full of *perverſneſſe or declining*. The third, which is the cauſe of both the former, when ſuch a people ſhall begin to be very generally overgone with Atheiſme, as to ſay [in their hearts] *the Lord hath forſaken the earth: The Lord ſeeth us not.* Then he ſaith, *That his eie ſhall not ſpare them, he will have no pitie, but recompence their way upon their heads.*

verſ 9.

Viz. *Firſt, when a land is full of bloudy or hainous ſinnes unrepented of.*

2. *Full of declining and perverſneſſe.*

3. *Overgone with Atheiſme.*

But to the end that we may conceive aright of theſe, we are to inquire wiſely; firſt what is meant by bloud, and ſo for the other words after in their place.

The meaning of the words.

Firſt, by bloud in theſe Prophets, who thus cried out that their land was defiled with bloud, is meant generally, all kinde of moſt horrible and capitall ſinnes, which doe deſerve and call for the ſhedding of the bloud of the offenders; whereby alſo graceleſſe men doe deſtroy themſelves and all others, ſo much as lieth in them.

1. By bloud is meant,
1. Generally all kinde of hainous and capitall ſinnes.

Theſe may well be called bloudy ſinnes thus in a ſpeciall manner. For as the Lord called *Corah* and his company, *wicked ſinners who deſtroied themſelves, ſinning againſt their owne ſoules*; ſo they had provoked the Lord to conſume all the congregation at once, had he not beene ſtaied by the inſtant ſupplication of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, when as the earth opened her mouth and ſwallowed them up for their rebellion againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*, the Lords moſt holy and faithfull ſervants. And ſo for murdering themſelves, this our Prophet *Ezekiel* ſaith of all wicked men, who will not be admoniſhed by the Lords Prophets to turn from their evill way, that *their bloud is upon their owne heads*, they are the murtherers of themſelves, by thoſe their ſinnes wherein they live impenitently. Thus alſo it ſeemeth evidently to be taken by the Lord himſelfe, in the firſt Chapter of the prophecie of *Eſay*, where he threatneth all the people in generall, that

Numb. 16. 38.

Verſ. 21.

Ezek. 33. 4, 5. & 7, 8.

Eſay 1. 15.

that *though they ſtretched out their hands and made many praiers, yet he would not heare them, becauſe their hands were full of bloud:* meaning thereby that they were full of hainous and bloudie ſinnes] Whereupon the Lord ſpeaks unto them all thus: *Waſh you, make you cleane, take away the evill of your workes from before my face: ceaſe to doe evill, learne to doe well. Then though your ſinnes were as crimſon and ſcarlet, meaning bloudy ſinnes, yet you ſhall be as ſnow and wooll,* that is, you ſhall be wholly cleanſed and purged from them, as if you had not ſinned. So here is the firſt generall ſignification.

2. All cruelty, and namely oppreſſion.

Secondly, by bloud in theſe Prophets is meant more ſpecially all oppreſſion, violence and cruelty, chiefly againſt the poore; whereby oppreſſors doe glut themſelves, as with the fleſh of the poore, and fill themſelves with their bloud, when they wring that from them by all cruell exactions, extortion or other violence, which ſhould be the maintaining and preſerving of their owne lives, and of their families; whether for the pampering of their bellies and pride of their attire, or for ſatisfying their owne greedy covetouſneſſe or ambitious deſires. Thus it is in the ſeventh of *Ezechiel,* where the Lord ſaith to him, *Make thee a chaine* [meaning, to chaine the people as Captives and ſlaves to carry them all away.] And why? *Becauſe,* ſaith the Lord, *their land is full of bloudy cries, and their citie is full of crueltie*; that is, it was full of all oppreſſions, violent exactions, unlawfull gaines, deceits, pillages. Thus the Lord complaines of them; *That they coveted fields and tooke them away by violence, and houſes and tooke them away, ſo they oppreſſed a man and his houſe, a man and his heritage.* By all which they are ſaid, *to have plucked off the skinnes of the poore, and to have eaten their fleſh.* So that their tables were furniſhed with the fleſh of the poore, and their cups running over with their bloud. The Prophet *Ieremy* ſaith moreover, *That the bloud of poore innocents was upon the wings* [or skirts] *of their garments,* [meaning that the brave and coſtly garments of the richer were died and imbroydered, laced and wrought with the bloud of the poore] All their exceſſe in their glorious apparell was maintained by their mercileſſe ſpoyling and turning out of the poore, and ſo by the ſhedding of their bloud. For the Lord hath ſuch a tender

Ezek.7.23.

Mic.2.2.

Mic.3.2,3.

Ier.2.34.

regard

regard of the poore, that he accounts not only the cruell oppreſſion of them to be the ſhedding of their bloud; but alſo the very want of compaſſion and pittie to releeve their neceſſities, and ſaith, *he will heare that cry of theirs; and that ſinne* [of lacke of pitie] *ſhall be upon the richer, when it grieveth them to looke upon the neceſſities of their poore brethren.* So the poore periſhing for lacke of theſe comforts, which he hath given to the richer to miniſter unto them, certainly their bloud muſt be required at their hands, who ſhould have releeved them. Now in this ſinne of unmercifulneſſe they exceeded Sodome it ſelfe, and ſo did juſtifie Sodome in regard of themſelves: *For that none did ſtrengthen the hand of the poore and needy*, [that is, none in reſpect] as this Prophet complaineth of them.

All lacke of compaſſion of the poore. *Deut.* 15.9,10.

Ezek. 16.48,49.

Thirdly, another kind of bloud whereby their land was defiled, was the bloud of the Prophets and faithfull ſervants of the Lord, for which the Lord complaineth: partly for the cruelties uſed againſt them, and more ſpecially for the very bloud of them, that had beene ſhed, and the land not yet purged thereof. As both the bloud ſhed before the daies of *Manaſſes*, and likewiſe that in his time, and alſo after. For ſo ſaith our Saviour: That upon that generation of them in his time, *ſhould come all the righteous bloud, that had beene ſhed on the earth from the bloud of Abel the righteous, unto the bloud of Zacharias the ſonne of Barachias*, meaning *Iehoiada*, who was otherwiſe called *Barachias*, *whom* (as the Holy Ghoſt ſaith) *the people ſtoned in the Courts of the houſe of the Lord, for reproving their ſinne, who at his death ſaid, the Lord looke upon it and require it.* Though they ſhed not this bloud in their owne perſons, but their forefathers did it ſo long before; yet becauſe the land was not yet purged of it, by their unfained repentance, and alſo becauſe they approved it ſtill, by their continued malice and cruelty againſt the holy Prophets and deare ſervants of the Lord; therefore even that bloud of *Zacharias* ſtill cried for vengeance, and the Lord did now looke upon it and require it, like as he praied at his death. More ſpecially doth the Lord threaten them for *the innocent bloud ſhed in the daies of Manaſſes, who filled Ieruſalem with innocent bloud*, and therfore the Holy Ghoſt ſaith, *The Lord would not pardon it.* Finally, the Lord denounceth this vengeance chiefly,

3.
A third kind, The bloud of the Prophets and Gods faithfull ſervants. As all the bloud ſhed from the beginning of the world. *Matth.* 23.35.
Namely of Zacharias. See *Iunius.* 2 *Chron.* 24.21. *Verſ.* 22.

Matth. 23.31.

2 *Chron.* 24.22.

The innocent bloud ſhed in the daies of *Manaſſes.* 2 *King.* 24.3,4. *Ier.* 15.4.

Their cruelty against those Prophets who warned them of this Captivitie.
*Lam.*4.13.
Vers. 13.
Vers. 14.

chiefly, and in direct words, for that bloud of the just, which was shed by the Priests, of which the Prophet *Ieremy* so complaines in the Lamentations, as if it had beene almost the only sinne, and the filling up of all other the provocations, for which this so incredible a judgement came upon them. For thus saith the Holy Ghost; *for the sinnes of the Prophets, and iniquities of the Priests, that shed the bloud of the just in the midst of her, therefore were they polluted and filled with bloud in the Captivitie.* What that bloud was, we have spoken before. As besides the shedding of the bloud of *Vriah* the Prophet, and it may be of some others; that the Priests chiefly thirsted after the bloud of those true Prophets, who about this time faithfully cryed out against the sinnes, and denounced this judgement to come: as namely the bloud of *Ieremy*. That they used all devices to take away their lives, digged pits and layed snares to catch them, imprisoned them, beat them, silenced them, drave them out, accused them most falsly to take away their very lives. And lastly, they used all wicked policies to make them odious to all, and accursed for everie body to seeke their destruction. And thereby to cause all sorts to despise all religion and feare of the Lord; and generally to abhorre all the good people of the Lord, and all true pietie and sinceritie, so to draw upon themselves most swift destruction untill they were consumed.

*Ier.*26.23.

*Ier.*18.8.
*Ier.*20.2.
*Ezek.*3.26.
*Ier.*26.11.

*Ier.*15.20.

2 *Chron.*36.15, 16,17.

4. Their land was defiled with the bloud of the soules that perished every where for lacke of knowledge and admonition.
*Ezek.*33.8.
Esay 56.9.
*Hos.*4.6.
*Ezek.*3.17,18, 19. 33.7,8.

Fourthly, by bloud whereby their land was defiled, was understood chiefly the bloud of the soules of all who perished everie where by all their blinde guides, their sleeping and flattering watchmen, yea by all sorts of unconscionable Pastors who let them perish in their sinnes, either for lacke of knowledge or for want of warning; because they shewed them not their sinnes, nor the anger of the Lord that was kindled against them for the same, both by the bloud of all those that perished at this destruction, and of all other who died in their sinne. That this bloud is especially meant, is most cleare, both by that place in the 3. Chapter of this our Prophet *Ezekiel* vers. 17,18, 19. and also in the 33. Chapter vers. 7,8. where the Lord tels this Prophet, and in him all other Prophets and Pastors, to whom the saving of his people, chiefly the charge of soules was committed, proportionally: *That he had made him a watchman over the house of Israel,*

Iſrael, and therefore he ſhould heare the word at his mouth, and admoniſh them from him. That when he ſaid unto any of the wicked, Oh wicked man thou ſhalt ſurely die the death, if he did not admoniſh the wicked of his way, that the wicked man ſhould die in his iniquitie, but his bloud he would require at his hand. Now this which he ſpake to him he ſpake to all the reſt of their Prophets, Prieſts and Paſtors, that all that periſhed in their ſins for lacke of knowledge, admonition, exhortation, or comfort, or any other way through their fault and neglect of their function, their bloud muſt be ſo required at their hands. By bloud is here meant principally the bloud that is the deſtruction of their ſoules, which were deſtroied by their ſins, wherin they died, for all the wicked died not by the ſword, nor by other violent deaths; but all dying in their ſinnes without repentance, died eternally, and ſo that bloud was chiefly to be required. This is moſt plaine by holy *Paul* clearing himſelfe at Epheſus, *that he was free from the bloud of them all*; [meaning the bloud of their ſoules] becauſe he had not omitted any thing which might tend to their ſalvation, therefore their bloud was on their owne heads, that would not be admoniſhed: uſing the very ſame phraſe. And even reaſon will teach thus much: for if the bloud of bodies, or the ſins whereby they deſerved death, did ſo defile the land, how much more then the bloud of ſoules, even of hundred thouſand ſoules, to wit, of every one who periſhed in their ſinnes and impenitency? And alſo in as much as the ſoule is more pretious than the body, and ſo the death more fearefull, and much more the eternall death both of ſoule and body together. If the bloud of the bodie of one *Abel* cried for vengeance, having ſo defiled the earth; how much more the bloud of the ſoules and bodies of ſo many at this time, even all, except their mourners, who depended upon the miniſterie of the faithfull Prophets and the word of the Lord; which were ſo few and in ſuch diſgrace at this time. And this was the firſt of thoſe ſinnes for which God would not ſpare, nor heare the praiers of the Prophets for them.

Acts 20. 19, 20. 26, 27, 28.

Their ſecond maine ſinne, for which God would not ſpare, was their generall perverſneſſe and defection increaſed without hope of returning.

The ſecond maine cauſe was this, that as their land was full of bloud, ſo their citie Ieruſalem was full of corrupt judgement, as our former tranſlation hath it; or rather as the word moſt plainly

ly signifieth, according to our new translation, and as the learned doe agree, their citie was full of perverſneſſe, or generall declining and Apoſtaſie or backſliding. The meaning is that they daily growed worſe and worſe in all ſtates and degrees, and in everie ſinne; ſo that there was no more hope, that the word of the Lord would doe them any more good. Though he cried unto them day by day, yet he but ſtretched out his hands to a rebellious and gainſaying people. His mercies alſo abuſed, made them ſtill more proud; even to kicke up the heele againſt him. As for his judgements, they likewiſe were paſt any more working upon their hearts, but they were ſtill more and more indurate. This was that which *Eſay* complained of long before, Asking *why they ſhould be ſmitten any more, ſeeing they fell away ſtill more and more, when the whole head was ſicke, and the whole heart was heavie*; when beſides their hainous ſinnes, Gods judgements and plagues were every where, and ever and anon moſt apparant upon them, and yet they ſtill increaſed their apoſtaſie and rebellion? All ruſhed ſtill forward to their ſinne, as the horſe to the battell, and no man ſaid, what evill have I done. They were generally paſt all thought of returning. Of this the Prophets crie out in every place, *and of ſpending their ſtrength in vaine.* That which our former tranſlation hath, was alſo moſt true of them, that their citie was full of corrupt judgement each way, or wreſting of judgement, as it is in the margent of our new tranſlation. For we may ſee what horrible corruption was in their judgement ſeats, *everie one louing gifts and following rewards: ſo that they could not judge the fatherleſſe*, as the Prophet ſpeakes, *neither could the widowes cauſe come before them.* For which God muſt needs ariſe and judge, even *for the ſighes of the poore*, and deale with them accordingly.

How corrupt alſo they were generally in judging of the good waies of God, and of all the godly, we have ſeene before, when they had only the flattering and wicked Prieſts and Prophets in honour: even thoſe who were vnto the Lord as wormwood and gall, when as the true and faithfull Prophets were in extreme diſgrace, hatred and obloquie, which is included in the former, that they were generally perverſe in all their evill waies,

and

מטה *declinatio, apoſtaſia. Avenar. Calvin. Junius.*

Eſay 65.2.

Neither word, judgements, nor mercies would doe them any more good.

Ier. 5.7.

Eſay 1.5.

Verſ. 6.

Verſ. 7.

Ier. 8.6.

There was alſo a marvellous corruption of judgement amongſt them, the root of all the reſt, and wraſting of judgement.

Eſay 1.23.

Pſal. 12.5.

Exod. 22.23.

Corruption in iudging of the good waies of God.

Ier. 23.

and ſtill waxing worſe and worſe, in ſtead of yeelding to the Lord and his true Prophets; and their perverſneſſe and corruption in judgement a ſpeciall cauſe of all the reſt of their apoſtaſie and rebellion.

Perverſneſſe in judgement cauſe of their perverſneſſe in manners.

The third and laſt maine ſinne, for which he would not now ſpare any longer, and which was become another principall cauſe of their declining, and that they were ſo paſt hope, was this, That they ſaid commonly in their practiſes, *that the Lord had forſaken the earth, he ſaw them not nor regarded them,* [meaning that he regarded them not above other people, as he had beene wont, neither did he ſhew himſelfe to viſibly, but let their enemies prevaile.] All things now came alike to all. They did not acknowledge him any longer in his chaſtiſements, whereby he had ſmitten them, nor in the judgements and dangers by which he threatned them from the Caldean. Becauſe they had beene oft ſmitten and terrified by him, and yet ever delivered, they were now become utterly obdurate in their ſinnes. They were wont to have beene humbled for any preſent ſigne of his diſpleaſure, like as, for a plague, or for a famine; now they could be humbled no more. They had beene wont frankly to acknowledge ſuch puniſhments to have beene the Lords hand, and moſt righteouſly inflicted, and ſo to behold his hand in all; but now they were altogether paſt any more ſuch ſenſe or acknowledgement. It was not now any more his hand that ſmit them, but ſome chance. God would have beene knowne of them, as being preſent amongſt them, and ſmiting them in ſuch calamities; but he was now farre away; there was no ſuch thought of God; no more meeting him in faſting, weeping and mourning, to pacifie him thereby; unleſſe in ſome ſtrange extremities, and as hypocrites are wont, for the very preſent time. And ſeeing that he let the Babylonian ſtill to prevaile more and more againſt them, and ſo the power of the enemy to be daily increaſed with their owne imminent perill, and moreover that he did not now give overthrowes to their enemies by ſome extraordinarie judgements, as their forefathers had ſeene experience, it is moſt like, that they thought, that he had now forſaken the earth, he now reſpected them no more, nor that religion of theirs.

Their laſt and principall ſinne a tenſeleſſe Atheiſme growing upon all, that they did not acknowledge God in his judgements, as they had beene wont.

theirs. Thus they were made more obstinate and senslesse generally, by all his rods and corrections. And thus they came (as we said) to a drousie kinde of Atheisme, to thinke that God had no such respect of any kinde of persons, neither that there was any such profit in serving the Lord, seeing now the most devout worshippers and his worthiest servants were in most contempt, reproach and affliction, as *Ieremy*, *Baruch*, *Ezekiel* and others, and that God regarded it not, nor respected any praiers that they made. This (as it may appeare) was become universall among the better sort: besides that desperate Atheisme amongst all the scorners and despisers of the Lord. And therefore seeing he did no more regard them, it was no matter what they did, how they framed themselves every one to the courses of the world and to please the time, and each for himselfe. Now these sinnes did so provoke the Lord, that he would spare them no longer, nor heare any more his servants for them.

Why the Lord cannot spare, when these sins come to this height.

Reasons.

1. Bloud defileth the land where the Lord dwelleth.

2 *Sam.* 21. 13, 14.

Num. 35. 33.

2. If God should spare, he should not have a Church left; his very elect could hardly be saved.

Hos. 5. 15.

Ier. 22. 21.

Whence we may see, that when a land comes so to abound with these sinnes, God will not, nay his justice and holinesse cannot suffer him to spare any longer. And there is most evident reason for it. As first, when a land is so polluted with bloud, as Iudah now was, he cannot spare: because we know that bloud defileth a land, and cannot be purged but by the bloud of the chiefe offenders and polluters of it, so farre as may be, and by the unfained repentance of all sorts for the same; for God dwelleth in the midst of his people, and cannot endure the place so defiled untill it be purged. Secondly, their perversnesse in daily declining and falling away from the Lord, must needs after a sort inforce him hereunto, even unto this heaviest judgement; for that otherwise all hope of their returning unto him was utterly cut off, or so much as of saving the very elect; unlesse he would have let all to fall away utterly, he must of necessitie use the uttermost severitie with them, and bring this Captivitie, for this was now the last remedie, and no other left. In their extreme affliction, those who were his, would returne and seeke him earnestly; (like as he forerold, and as it came to passe in the Captivitie) and even those who in their prosperitie said that they would not heare. Thirdly, Atheisme now spreading so

ſo generally amongſt them, could not but even compell the Lord, (that we may ſo ſpeake in a holy manner) to ſmite them harder than ever formerly, and thus to leave them up; for that, he ſhould not otherwiſe have beene acknowledged any more. Every one would have deſpiſed him and ſcorned his ſervice, and utterly trodden under foot all his religion and true feare. Therefore for the maintenance of his ſacred juſtice and pure worſhip, he was (as was ſaid) after a ſort thus inforced to enter into this ſtrict reſolution, to render all their waies upon their owne head, and not to ſuffer his eie to ſpare them: but to make them to acknowledge hereby at length, that he ſaw them well enough, and all their wickedneſſe; and that thoſe his former rods came not by chance or fortune, but in his diſpleaſure, and yet in mercy calling them to repentance, if any thing might have prevailed with them.

3. When Gods people grow to Atheiſme, he ſhould not be acknowledged nor his juſtice and worſhip maintained but by ſuch ſeveritie.

To returne unto our ſelves, and to apply this unto our preſent time, if that the Lord may be pleaſed to awaken thoſe hereby, who have not beene ſtirred by any thing before. Firſt, we have ſeene that the ſinnes of a nation where the Church of God is, may be ſo hainous as that the Lord will not heare the praiers of his moſt faithfull ones to ſpare the whole; nor be any way pacified, but by a generall humiliation and turning of his people unto him. And ſecondly, that howſoever he will not ſtay his vengeance at the praiers of a few, nor be pacified towards any moe than doe unfainedly humble themſelves, ſo that they only ſhall ſave their owne ſoules; yet upon a generall humiliation and turning he will be appeaſed, and give the enemies of his people for their ranſome. Thirdly, how we may know when the ſinne of a people is come to that height, and what are the principall tokens thereof. As firſt, when a land is full of bloud, and how we may diſcerne that; ſecondly, when it is full of defection or perverſneſſe: thirdly, when Atheiſme begins to ſpread generally if but in this kinde, that men begin to ſay, God hath forſaken the earth, the Lord ſeeth us not.

Application.

The points proved before.

Now the Lord calleth ſtill upon us all, in the riches of his mercy to ſearch our ſelves in time, whether our nation be come unto this height of ſinne, and whether theſe three ſignes be verified truly amongſt us yea or no. Surely the Lord hath made it moſt

To trie whether we be come to this height of ſinne and have theſe tokens.

God hath manifeſted his love as much to our nation as to any other.

moſt manifeſt that he doth tender this our nation as much as any other, if not above all the nations under the heavens, all our bleſſings bodily and ſpirituall being rightly conſidered, and compared joyntly together, with any other: having ſo made it as a mirrour to moſt others, in many reſpects. As for advancing and continuing his Goſpell to be ſo generally profeſſed in ſuch ſafetie; for the overthrow of Babylon; the glorious witneſſe of his Martyrs; for being a harbour and Sanctuarie to his afflicted ſervants of other countries. Alſo for admirable peace and miraculous deliverances, above all other countries or ages. To omit all other the bleſſings wherewith he hath inriched and preferred it, and all his fatherly corrections, whereby he hath chaſtiſed it, to bring it to amendment. And for that cauſe he declares before all the world, that he is moſt unwilling to enter into judgement with us, of all other people, although we have provoked him, above all others ſo profeſſing his heavenly truth. To this end he ceaſeth not yet by one meanes or other to ſet before our faces daily, both our ſins whereby we have angred him, together with his judgements prepared for us, unleſſe we ſeeke to pacifie him forthwith; as alſo the meanes how he may be appeaſed and reconciled unto us, and that we may ſtill injoy all his wonted mercies, even perpetually. And on the other ſide he giveth not over to threaten us, to make us the ſpectacle of miſerie and of his wrath to all other people, like as he made Ieruſalem, if no other meanes can ſerve. If therefore we would eſcape his whip from Babylon, ſo long threatned, and all other miſeries, and keepe ſtill all his former mercies, and alſo obtaine many moe, he yet admoniſheth us all wiſely to ponder of theſe things. Whether the ſinne of our nation be not as great, and as apparant by theſe tokens, as that of Iudah, when he would ſpare no longer; conſidering the glorious light of the Goſpell and other meanes which we enjoy. If it be ſo, then doth the Lord proclaime unto us from heaven on the one part mercy, with all his bleſſings, if we will yet ſeeke him and turne, as his people ever did when he ſpared them: and on the other ſide nothing but vengeance if we continue obſtinate againſt him. He ſpreads at once both his white and his blacke tent; offers mercie, and full remiſſion, if we humble our ſelves, acknowledge

And manifeſteth that he is moſt unwilling to enter into judgement with us.

Neither ceaſeth to call on us and ſhew unto us the things which concerne our peace.

The Lord ſpreads out both his white and his blacke tent together.

ledge and reforme our ſinne, and meet him by repentance. Nothing but vengeance, if we doe not preſently reſolve hereupon, to meet him before his decree come forth.

To this purpoſe, to proceed in order, beginning with the firſt: what can we anſwer the Lord if (like as he will charge every one of theſe ſinnes upon the heads of all the impenitent offenders at the laſt day, ſo) he ſhould charge it now upon our heads, that it is our land that is full of bloud, in all theſe ſorts wherein he charged Iudah.

To trie what we can anſwer the Lord if he charge theſe on us.

1. That it is full of horrible and capitall, yea even bloudie ſinnes, deſerving deſtruction and crying for vengeance, who muſt not needs confeſſe it, eſpecially conſidering thoſe things before mentioned, the ſinnes committed ſince he brought the light of the Goſpell amongſt us? 2. Who heareth not the cries of the poore becauſe of violence and oppreſſion, through the multitudes of unmercifull men, who flay their poore tenants, plucke off their skins, and eat up their fleſh, having all their garments red with their bloud? As alſo for all our moſt ravenous uſurers, who both long have and doe ſtill feed upon mans fleſh continually; in as much as that cruell monſter gnaweth in peeces the very ſinewes, and ſucketh out the vitall ſpirits of the poore. Whether they ſleepe or wake, day and night it eateth, that it leaveth very few untill they be utterly conſumed. Beſides the crie of ſo many brought to extreme poverty and ready to famiſh, eſpecially if God ſhall ſend a little ſcarcitie, what by theſe meanes and the dearenеſſe of all things heretofore ſo many yeeres continued; more ſpecially by want of commiſeration in the rich ſo generally, and that heavie hand of our God taking away ſo many of the cattell of the poorer ſort in the former yeeres, partly by reaſon of the grievous ſeaſons, whereby the dumbe beaſts periſhed for want of food. So that a very great part of our poore had very hardly to preſerve their lives and their families, much leſſe will have, if the Lord doe againe ſend but one other deare yeere as our ſinnes doe crie for many; having already ſold up all to buy them bread. To come therefore to our ſoules and conſciences. Is not that crie amongſt us in every towne, in moſt parts of our land, which was in the daies of that worthy *Nehemiah*, and which that holy Governour did ſo

1. That our land is full of bloud.

The crie of violence and oppreſſion going up to heaven for the crueltie of Landlords, Vſurers,

Men void of commiſeration

The like crie amongſt us which was in the daies of *Nehemiah*.

ſo much lay to heart; or at leaſt was it not in our late dearths? And muſt it not needs be every day more and more againe, if the Lord never ſo little withdraw his mercifull hand? I will firſt ſet downe the words of the Holy Ghoſt, both for the crie of the people, and alſo how that good *Nehemiah* was affected therewith, and what he did for redreſſe of the ſame, and then will I a little apply them, to trie if the Lord ſhall vouchſafe the like bleſſing now unto that ſpeech of his, for undoubtedly the Lord now ſpeaketh unto us thereby, as he did then to them. The words are in the 5. Chapter of *Nehemiah* beginning at the firſt verſe.

Neh.5.1. The cry of the poore in dearth. Verſ.2.

Verſ. 1. *Now there was a great cry of the people, and of their wives, againſt their brethren the Iewes.*

2. *For there were that ſaid; we, our ſons and our daughters are many: therefore we take up corne* (for them) *that we may eat and live.*

[a] *We have morgaged.* [b] *That we might buy corne, becauſe of the dearth.*

3. *And there were that ſaid,* [a] *we muſt gage our lands and our vineyards, and our houſes,* [b] *and take up corne for the famine.*

4. *There were alſo that ſaid, we have borrowed for the Kings tribute, and that upon our lands and vineyards.*

5. *Yet now our fleſh is as the fleſh of our brethren, our children as their children: and loe, we bring into bondage our ſonnes, and our daughters to be ſervants, and ſome of our daughters are brought into bondage already; neither is it in our power to redeeme them, for other men have our lands and vineyards.*

6. *And I was very angry, when I heard their cry and theſe words.*

7. *Then I conſidered with my ſelfe, and I rebuked the Nobles, and ſaid unto them, You exact Vſury every one of his brethren. And I ſet a great aſſembly againſt them.*

8. *And I ſaid unto them, we after our abilitie have redeemed our brethren the Iewes, which were ſold unto the heathen; and will you even ſell your brethren? or ſhall they be ſold unto us? Then held they their peace, and found nothing to anſwer.*

9. *Alſo I ſaid, it is not good that ye doe: ought ye not to walke in the feare of our God, becauſe of the reproach of the heathen our enemies?*

[c] *Doe lend them money and corne.*

10. *I likewiſe, and my brethren and my ſervants* [c] *might exact of them money and corne: I pray you let us leave off this Vſury.*

11. *Reſtore*

11. *Reſtore I pray you to them even this day their lands and their vineyards, their olive yards, and their houſes; alſo the hundreth part of the money and of the corne, the wine and the oile that ye exact of them.*

12. *Then ſaid they, we will reſtore it to them, and will require nothing of them, ſo will we doe as thou ſaieſt. Then I called the Prieſts and tooke an oath of them, that they ſhould doe according to this promiſe.*

13. *Alſo I ſhooke my lap and ſaid, So God ſhake out every man from his houſe and from his labour, that performeth not this promiſe; even thus be he ſhaken out and emptied. And all the congregation ſaid, Amen, and praiſed the Lord. And the people did according to this promiſe.*

Application.

To apply this likewiſe to our ſelves. I ſay againe, what towne have we almoſt, wherein there is not a great cry of ſome of the poore people, their wives and children, for intolerable oppreſſion by racking of rents, fines, and like exactions: for the lamentable povertie and beggery that many are brought unto? Nay, where is the village, (ſome few here and there excepted) wherein ſundry have not beene driven to cry out; We, our ſons and our daughters are many, our charges great, therefore we are faine to gage and ſell up our goods, even that little which we have, to buy corne, to provide but bread to preſerve our lives? And where is that place wherein many do not make moane, and ſigh to God in the ſorrow of their ſoules, that they are enforced (though with griefe of their hearts, and as that which they hate) to take up money upon uſurie, which eats them to the very bones; and to pawne whatſoever they have for the ſame, and in the end to ſell houſes or goods to redeeme themſelves from it, if ever they be able? And all this commonly, but to maintaine the lives of themſelves and families; and to pay ſuch rents and duties as doe neceſſarily lie upon them. And doe not all theſe ſorts cry out and complaine unto God, as they of *Iudah* did? Is not our fleſh, ſay they all, as the fleſh of our brethren, and our ſonnes as their ſonnes; that is, are not we as much worth, and as precious by the law of Nature: yea, & as well to be regarded by the commandement of the Lord for our low degree, as they who ſpoile us for theirs? Hath not the Lord ſtrictly charged all

all our brethren, to whom he hath given more plenty of the things of this life, to lend unto us freely in all our neceſſities, and to give where we are not able to pay againe?

Prov. 31.8. Pardon me, if I open my mouth in the cauſe of the dumbe: If I here ſet before the faces of us all, the holy Statute of our bleſſed God, in this very caſe, which may ſeeme by our practiſe, never to have beene heard of amongſt the greateſt part of us. All the equitie and ſubſtance whereof appertaineth to us, and we muſt certainly be accountable for it, before the great tribunall. This is it:

Deut. 15.7. The holy law of God, for the care to be had for all the poore of the land.

If one of thy brethren with thee be poore, within any of thy gates in thy land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou ſhalt not harden thy heart, nor ſhut thy hand from thy poore brother (ſaith the Lord.)

Verſ. 8. *But thou ſhalt open thine hand wide unto him, and ſhalt ſurely lend him ſufficient for his need, in that which he wanteth.*

9. *Beware that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, ſaying the ſeventh yeere, the yeere of releaſe is at hand,* [d] *and thine eie be evill againſt thy poore brother, and thou giveſt him nought, and he cry unto the Lord againſt thee, and it be ſinne unto thee.*

[d] *Therefore it grieveth thee to looke upon thy poore brother. If we muſt give in their neceſſity, then may we not ſtill plucke from them.*

10. *Thou ſhalt ſurely give him, and thine heart ſhall not be grieved when thou giveſt unto him: becauſe that for this thing, the Lord thy God ſhall bleſſe thee in all thy workes, and in all that thou putteſt thine hand unto.*

For the poore ſhall never ceaſe out of the land.

11. *For there ſhall be ever ſome poore in the land: therefore I command thee, ſaying, thou ſhalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poore, and to thy needy in the land.* Theſe are the words, and this is the law of our loving God.

We muſt lend, looking for nothing againe. *Luc.* 6.33.

In which we may ſee the tender care that he hath for his people, That all the richer lend unto the poorer freely in their honeſt and urgent neceſſitie, looking for nothing againe, as our Saviour expoundeth it; not only not looking for any uſe or intereſt, but hardly the very principall ſometimes; eſpecially in the extraordinary neceſſitie of a godly man. And not this alone, that they lend thus freely, but alſo that they give unto them frankly and liberally, and then in ſo doing, the Lord, who is delighted in mercy, will bleſſe ſuch a land; yea, he will ſurely

How the Lord will bleſſe ſuch a care for the poore.

bleſſe

bleſſe all them, who have hearts to doe this, in all the works of their hands. But contrarily, he threatneth that if the poore ſhall be conſtrained to crie unto him for ſuccour, and for this lacke of pitie, that it ſhall be ſinne unto them. And what ſinne? Such a ſinne as crieth for vengeance unto him, and for which his wrath will be kindled to ſend a generall deſtruction upon all, as he did upon Sodome, for this ſame very ſin amongſt the principall. When in the abundance of their idleneſſe, pride and fulneſſe of bread amongſt the rich, no man ſtrengthened the hand of the poore and needie.

Contrarily, what a ſinne the lacke of care for the poore is. *Ezek.* 16. 49.

I have therefore urged this holy Law, becauſe of the extreme unmercifulneſſe of the richer ſort, who having gotten moſt of the ſubſtance of the Land into their hands, will lend almoſt nothing but upon uſe and conſideration; with ſuch ſecuritie as the poorer ſort are not able to make, no, nor to pay the uſe of it, but to be eaten out by it, in a ſhort time. Whereupon they have nothing at all to lend to theſe, for whom the Lord takes ſuch care, much leſſe to give unto them freely. Yea, I have the rather thus ſet it before the faces of all, becauſe the ſuperſtitious Papiſt ſhall riſe up in judgement againſt all ſuch; ſeeing we know how much they are wont to glory of their workes of mercie in this kinde. And finally, becauſe no one thing would more move the Lord to extend ſtill his pitifull compaſſion upon this our ſinfull Nation, and to magnifie his mercie upon us, than this in thus *breaking off our ſinnes by ſhewing compaſſion towards the poore, nor any one ſinne amongſt us, which will more certainly bring his vengeance inevitably upon this our Nation without pitie, than this ſame ſinne of unmercifulneſſe*, to requite us accordingly: this crying ſinne, the crie whereof will never ceaſe untill it be redreſſed, either by reformation or vengeance.

Vnmercifulneſſe crieth loud for vengeance. It wil bring judgement without mercie. *Iames* 2. 13.

But to returne to the crie of our people, as of thoſe in *Nehemiahs* daies. Have they not cried out thus, Our fleſh is as the fleſh of our brethren: we are as precious to God as they, and many of us as well borne and brought up, as moſt of thoſe who now buy and ſell us as for old ſhooes: and our ſonnes are as their ſonnes, and yet we bring into bondage our ſonnes and our daughters, to become ſervants and ſlaves; yea, even beggers perpetually, unleſſe the Lord doe redreſſe it from heaven. As for our ſelves, there is no power in our hands to helpe, walking in the feare and obedience of our God, and ſeeking to get by honeſt meanes: for we have alreadie ſpent up all our goods

The generall crie of the poore. *Amos* 8. 6. That they and theirs muſt be brought to perpetuall beggery.

to ſave our lives; although we have fared hardly, gone late to bed, with many a hungrie meale, toiled and moiled day and night. To appeale to all our conſciences, muſt not this needs be acknowledged before the moſt juſt Iudge, that this is now generally become the ſtate of our Land, in the poore countrie Townes at leaſt, that one very great part thereof is like to become ſtarke beggers? Are not all rents ſo raiſed, and every thing ſo ſurveyed, meaſured and over-meaſured, ſo inhanced and improved, that no man can live of them, but by taking unreaſonable prices for whatſoever they have to ſell, and ſo in ſelling each commoditie at a moſt unconſcionable rate; and all ſtill to the grinding of the faces of the poore, and plucking off their skinnes, the ripping up their hearts, and chopping in ſunder the bones of all them who have nothing left to take unto, but their poore hand labour. As for the toiling husband-man, (by whom the Land is chiefly maintained) can he pay his rents and duties, and releeve his poore family, though never ſo hardly, but by ſelling his corne at a high price, to undoe utterly all the meaner ſort who live on trades, or have no corne growing; unleſſe it be in the moſt plentifull yeeres. And when the Lord ſendeth a little plentie, muſt there not then needes be tranſportations of the corne over the ſeas (for this hath beene our cuſtome) untill the price be extreme againe to the poore, who buy all? Otherwiſe, ſay the great men, how could the husband-man pay his rent, unleſſe hee ſhould ſell his corne ſo deare? In the meane time what becomes of the poore, it makes no matter, ſo that they have their rents: And muſt not every one taking land, houſe or ſhop, at ſuch exceſſive rates, ſell all their commodities and labours accordingly, or elſe be undone, whereby amongſt them all, the poore are ever ſure to be utterly ſwallowed up. They muſt of neceſſitie live in pinching and miſery, even in ſlavery and ſervitude all the daies of their life, and every one in grudging and heart-burning againſt others.

Tranſportations, and why. The husbandman cannot pay his rent but by ſelling his corne at high prices. According to the rate of the corn muſt all other commodities be. That the poore muſt ever live in miſery.

So that we are like to come to that ſtate in a very ſhort time, for ought that man can ſee, and as it hath beene long feared, that we ſhall have in moſt of our countrey Townes, ſome few, (it may be two or three, at leaſt very few in reſpect of the reſt) to be Gentlemen or Cormorants, the reſt as peſants and ſlaves, or extremely poore. Have there not beene hereof too many preſidents alreadie, and how our Townes are growing generally to a kinde of baſe ſervitude and villenage

What we are growing to hereby, all to be Gentlemen, or Peſants.

villenage againe, as is ſtill to be feared; unleſſe the Lord prevent it either by his juſt vengeance, (which this may cauſe us to dread, and to crie that it may be ever turned from us) or that there be ſome ſpeedie redreſſe by our Chriſtian Magiſtrate, which all Gods people pray for. Thus our good Land is in danger to be brought to confuſion. This our Canaan is readie to eat up her owne people: which is as fully able in it ſelfe to feed all her inhabitants abundantly, as ever was Canaan, (yea although we were ſo many times moe) if theſe our unchriſtian oppreſſions were taken away. Eſpecially we having ſuch worthy helpes of the Countries belonging to our dominions, to receive ſo many of us, as need ſhall require, and as the Lord ſhall yet more increaſe us.

The cauſe of all our unmerciſulneſſe and ſpoiling commonly. *Ezek.* 16. 49 To maintaine thoſe ſinnes of Sodome.

And whereupon hath, and doth ſtill, all this unmerciſulneſſe and ſpoiling amongſt us ariſe? Surely principally (as the world knoweth) to maintaine thoſe dreadfull ſinnes amongſt us, as amongſt them of Iudah, thoſe which the Lord ſaith were the ſinnes of Sodome, to wit, that unſupportable pride of all ſorts, that fulneſſe of bread, exceſſe of belly-cheere and idleneſſe. To the end commonly to ſupport theſe, our rents have beene ſo raiſed, our tillage ſo decayed, and turned to ſheepe paſtures, our Townes ſo diſpeopled or filled with beggers, not one of many able to give a ſhiue of bread to the poore: So that take away thoſe crying ſinnes of Sodome from amongſt us, which muſt needs otherwiſe take us all away in time; and wee have juſt cauſe to hope, that all theſe unnaturall vexations will ceaſe.

Oh thou that movedſt thy holy ſervant *Nehemiah*, to be very angrie when he heard this crie of the poore, that he uſed forthwith all meanes for redreſſe of the ſame; who alſo didſt proſper the worke in his hand; move likewiſe now the heart of thy principall ſervant, raiſed up for us in like manner, that he may have the ſame holy indignation! Inable him to ſee the redreſſe of all theſe oppreſſions, that this deliverance of the poore may in like manner be wrought by his hand. That this crie of bloud ceaſing and turned into mercy, thou maiſt alſo ceaſe from thy fierce wrath, and ever rejoyce to doe us good, and to make us as Canaan, to the comming of Chriſt Ieſus. And thus much for the crie of the bloud ſhed by all ſorts of unmercifull oppreſſours, whereby our Land muſt needs be acknowledged to be full of bloud.

Our Land defiled

Thirdly, for the bloud of Gods ſervants. How can we deny, but that

with the bloud of Gods ſervants, in Queene *Maries* daies.

Vſuall hatred againſt Gods faithfull ſervants, by all thoſe who have choſen to live in their evill wayes.

The deadly malice againſt all making conſcience of their waies.

1 *Joh.* 3. 15.

that our Land did even ſwimme with it? I meane with the bloud of thoſe holy Martyrs and faithfull witneſſes of Ieſus, ſo cruelly murdered in the bloudie daies of Queene *Mary*, like as Ieruſalem in the daies of *Manaſſes*? And which way can we thinke that it hath beene purged thereof, more than Ieruſalem was in the daies of *Ioſiah*? Alſo for many of Gods faithfull Meſſengers, who have in all this time ſince thoſe daies cried out againſt all our abominations, and proclaimed deſolation, who can be ignorant of the deadly malice againſt them, and that by all thoſe who have choſen to live in their evill waies? Have not all ſuch uſually practiſed to ſmite them with their tongues, to make every body to curſe them, & to plot by al means to take away their lives, or to bring ſome extreme evill or miſery upon them, more than that they have beene protected by our good lawes, and ſome godly Magiſtrates ſtirred up for their ſuccour; or ſome other gracious meanes provided by the Lord for them. And likewiſe for the generall and moſt deadly malice, againſt all who make conſcience of their waies (which hatred we know to be the ſhedding of their bloud in the ſight of God) how can we gaine-ſay it, but that in many places it is farre ſafer to be a notorious whoremonger, a drunkard, a railer, an open profeſſor of all profaneneſſe and outragious licenciouſneſſe, yea a profeſſed enemy to all true piety, than to feare the Lord unfainedly? The one ſort for moſt part in credit and reputation as the only good fellowes, the other odious to all, as not worthy to live upon the earth; and thereupon are they ready to be driven out of every place, and threatned as *Lot*, ſo farre as the Lord doth not reſtraine the rage of the wicked. Who can deny this (if he know the world abroad in any ſort) but that it hath beene and is ſtill in many places counted farre better for a man, who is noted to be a religious profeſſor, and truly conſcionable, to put up almoſt all the injuries that can be done unto him, and to be ſpoiled of whatſoever the wicked would have, than to come to ſeeke for redreſſe? For hath not this beene matter of weight ſufficient to overthrow the moſt innocent, in ſuch places, if the adverſary could but raiſe this clamour againſt him, to be a Puritane, and have ſome notorious ſlander, any good enough, to incenſe all who are badly diſpoſed to cry, Theſe are the holy Profeſſors. Thus doe they tread under foot many a deare ſervant of the Lord, even for their care to pleaſe and glorifie their God, and that they may not diſpleaſe him in any thing.

May not the Lord herein appeale to our conſciences, whether this be not the counſell that in many places ſuch a mans beſt and wiſeſt friends will give unto him, be his cauſe never ſo honeſt, the wrong done by the adverſarie never ſo apparant, himſelfe alſo moſt innocent; yet ſtill to put up all, and let all goe, eſpecially in all leſſe matters, rather than to fare worſe? yea if hee be but a man that is noted for any more conſcionable profeſſion than ordinarily, as to make conſcience of the Sabbaths, to reforme his family and his owne waies, and not to runne with the reſt to all exceſſe, unleſſe ſuch doe fall into the hands of ſome good Magiſtrate unfainedly fearing the Lord, or that God over-rule and protect them by an extraordinarie providence.

The advice that a mans wiſeſt friends will give him, for putting up all wrongs, rather than to ſeeke redreſſe in moſt places, if he be noted for profeſſion.

To omit that all the Popiſh ſort doe as eagerly thirſt to have their hands imbrued, and to be ſatiate with the bloud of us all, that ſoundly profeſſe the Goſpell, as ever did their fathers in thoſe bloudie daies: the hearts of theſe being as bloudie now, as ever the hands of thoſe were then.

The thirſting after our bloud by the Popiſh ſort.

And to come to the laſt kinde of bloud, the bloud of ſoules; what can we anſwer the Lord, if he charge us that our Land is full thereof, even full of the bloud of ſoules; which crieth louder from the earth for vengeance, than did the bloud of *Abel*: when every one periſheth that lacketh knowledge, whether it be but the knowledge of his owne naturall miſerie, or of Ieſus Chriſt, or of that narrow way leading to life, or but of the bypathes leading to deſtruction: when as alſo every man deſtroyeth his owne ſoule that liveth but in any one notorious ſinne: ſeeing, as wee know, the wages of ſinne is death; though it be but of one ſinne alone, or but the omitting of one neceſſarie dutie, whereof our conſcience is convinced. Or if a man yeeld not a willing obedience to the glorious Goſpell of the Lord Ieſus Chriſt, what muſt the ſtate of our Nation needs be in this reſpect? Muſt it not of neceſſitie ſwimme with bloud? Is it not enough to make our hearts to bleed within us, if wee but ſeriouſly thinke of the defects in many Miniſters? As firſt for the ignorant Miniſters, who, ſith that they know not that damnable eſtate wherein they ſtand themſelves, can never know nor have any ſenſe of the ſtate of their people; but being

4. Our Land is ful of the bloud of ſoules. *Hoſea* 4. 6.

Every one periſheth that lacketh knowledge. *Iohn* 17. 3. *Matth.* 7. 13. *Rom.* 6. 23. *Ezek.* 18. 20, 21.

1. For ignorant Miniſters and all periſhing by them.

being blinde and leading the blinde, all depending upon them muſt needs periſh, unleſſe God ſhall ſave any of them extraordinarily. Secondly, for all our negligent and careleſſe Paſtors, who though they have ſome knowledge, yet have no conſcience to ſave one ſoule, by admoniſhing them of their evill way to pull them out of hell, but rather by their careleſneſſe harden them in their ſinnes, as if there were no danger in ſinning againſt the Lord. Thirdly, for thoſe who are the ring-leaders of all their congregations to all riot and exceſſe; or at leaſt moſt ſcandalous either for intolerable greedineſſe, or for one moſt notorious vice or other. All of whom, as *Elies* ſonnes make the religion of God to be blaſphemed amongſt all the Popiſh and wicked; and indeed cauſe many of thoſe who are beſt affected to neglect the meanes of their ſalvation, or to become key-cold in the uſe thereof. Beſides that they cauſe ſo many weake ones to ſtagger, yea to fall away, ſome at the right hand, as to the ſeparation, others at the left, and thoſe in great multitudes, as to Popiſh Atheiſme, worldlineſſe, and all profane licentiouſneſſe. Fourthly, how can it be otherwiſe, but that innumerable ſoules muſt needs periſh, through ſo many every where crying peace, peace, and all is well; becauſe they ſee not the vengeance readie to ruſh upon themſelves and on us all. And that alſo, either becauſe they lie and ſleepe and delight in ſleeping, and ſo call all the beaſts of the forreſt to devoure: or for that the world hath blinded their eyes, that thereupon they are become ſervants of men, and ſo dare hardly diſpleaſe any by telling them of their ſinnes, much leſſe any of the greater. For is it not come to this paſſe, that hee is a rare meſſenger of God, one of a thouſand, as *Iob* ſpeakes, that dare declare his meſſage faithfully, to tell every man of his ſinnes, and to diſtribute to every one his owne portion in due ſeaſon?

2. Negligent and careleſſe Paſtors and all loſt by them.

3. By lewd and ſcandalous Miniſters.

4. By ſuch as crie peace, peace.

Eſay 56. 10, 11.

By Popiſh and corrupt teachers.

By enſamples.

To omit all others periſhing by Popiſh and corrupt teachers, not only by ſuch as creep in ſecret corners, as our Romiſh Frogs; but often by ſuch as are not afraid to ſet to ſale their abominable wares publikely. And all thoſe who are deſtroyed by the wicked enſamples of Atheiſts, Papiſts, blaſphemers and mercileſſe men, and more ſpecially by ſo many evill preſidents of men of greater note, ſo extremely irreligious and outragious in impietie; beſides

beſides the bad patternes almoſt in every houſe daily increaſed. And finally to paſſe over in ſilence that generall neglect in Superiours, of the ſoules committed to them; for even for theſe muſt each ſuperiour be accountable, for every ſoule within his gates; if they doe not their uttermoſt endevour that they may have the meanes of ſalvation: or if they faile in lacke of compaſſion to enforce them to yeeld obedience to the meanes, ſo farre as they are able to effect it. And thus much for the bloud whereby our Land is defiled; for which we may juſtly feare that the Lord cannot ſpare, but muſt needs take vengeance in purging our Land with the bloud of the offenders, unleſſe we prevent him ſpeedily, or that he is about to purge us by the fire of the laſt and dreadfull day.

Through neglect of ſuperiours for the ſoules committed to them. *Exod.* 20.

For the ſecond cauſe why the Lord would not ſpare them, which was their generall perverſneſſe and defection. That they waxed daily worſe in every kinde of iniquitie, notwithſtanding all the meanes which he could uſe, untill there was no remedie. That we may apply it alſo unto our ſelves, preſſing it a little further. Who is there ſo blinde, that ſeeth not the ſame amongſt us? Who is ſo hard hearted, that doth not daily mourne for it? Is not the word of the Lord become unto us, in very many places, as if it had loſt all power, to turne us any longer from our ſinnes unto the Lord? Is it not received as the word from the mouth of this our Prophet, only *as a ſweet ſong of one that can ſing well, or that hath a ſweet voice*, for the learning or eloquence of the Preachers alone, not to worke any reformation of life or true repentance: but every mans heart running ſtill after their covetouſneſſe, or other like ſinnes? Or which is much worſe, doe we not decline daily more and more, and grow to this, as they immediatly before this vengeance came on them; *To mocke the ſervants of the Lord, to miſuſe his meſſengers untill there be no remedie*; and this only for the words ſake, or their faithfulneſſe in delivering of it.

Application of the ſecond cauſe why the Lord could not ſpare, *viz.* That they fell away more and more. Our defection.

The word become unfruitfull and without power. *Ezek.* 33. 30, 31, 32, 33. Received, as the word by the mouth of *Ezekiel.* 2 *Chron.* 36. 16.

And as for Gods mercies, have they not made us to be ſo farre off from repentance, by our abuſe of them, as to be daily worſe and worſe? Have not our wonderfull deliverances, before we have ſo much as felt any evill, with the Lords forbearance and long ſuffering, our proſperitie, thoſe rich and innumerable favours

Gods mercies have made us ſo inſolent as to ſay we will not heare.

Ierem. 22. 21.

Hence we have given over our ſelves to follow our hearts.

Pſal. 12.

Gods judgements have made us to fall away more and more.

Eſay 1. 5, 6.

Eſpecially ever ſince our deliverance from our ſo long feared day.

Micah 6. 9.

vours of the Lord, chiefly in our Prince, Peace, Goſpell, and other his bleſſings, made us ſo inſolent, that he may ſpeake unto us, but we will not heare? Is it not hence amongſt other cauſes that we are ſo given over more and more in moſt places to bathe our ſelves, and to wallow in all ſenſualitie, according to the carnall deſire of every mans owne evill heart, to commit every ſin with greedineſſe, and with an high hand, ſaying, who ſhall controule us, or who is Lord over us?

Finally, for his judgements, let our owne conſciences but ſpeake plainly, whether he have not as good cauſe to ſay of us, as ever of Iudah; *Why ſhould they be ſmitten any more, they daily fall away more and more.* Let our going backward but in this one thing, even from feare of any more judgement to be now towards us for our ſinnes, (ſince the deliverance of our Nation, by the admired entrance of our Royall King) beare witneſſe hereof. Notwithſtanding, that ſaving us from that dreadfull expectation, his other leſſe judgements have never ceaſed ſince; but he hath been calling on us by his milder rods, as hath beene ſhewed, yeere by yeere, and almoſt day by day, thus: *Heare the rod and who hath appointed it.* What feare of the Lord is thence wrought in us by that ſword of the Angell deſtroying ſo long together, or by the multitudes that periſhed thereby? The breaking the ſtaffe of our bread ſo oft, (wherein the greateſt part of us might have famiſhed, had not he beene ſo pitifull, feeding us from other Countries and many a time ſince, ſo ſhutting up the floud-gates of heaven at our cries) yet what yeelding to the Lord hath it wrought? Although theſe judgements of peſtilence and dearth, chiefly continuing ſo long on vs, and our cruell oppreſſours like wilde beaſts devouring the poore, (as the Lord himſelfe compares them) are the moſt evident and immediate fore-runners of the heavieſt vengeance that can come upon a Nation, to wit, of the bloudie ſword, as being next unto it in greatneſſe, yet whom have theſe humbled? Yea albeit we have had ſo many prodigious and terrible fore-warnings, each almoſt in the necke of others, like the plagues of Egypt, as hath beene declared, yet what repentance have all theſe wrought? In a word, albeit the Lord proclaimes unto us, by all theſe his ſtrokes ſo doubled and trebled, that he will make us to ſtoope

Peſtilence, famine, and wilde beaſts next fore-runners of the ſword.

Ezek. 14. 13, 14, 15.
Zeph. 3. 3.
Levit 26. 23, 24, 25, 26.
Deut. 28.

unto

unto him and ſeeke his face, or he will proceed to his extremeſt vengeance; yet how we have ſtooped or ſought him in all theſe, our want of humiliations for them, of faſting, crying, teares, doe teſtifie againſt us all. Seeing that of late time theſe things have not beene heard of, nor ſo much as thought needfull amongſt us, (notwithſtanding the hainouſneſſe of our ſinne ſo encreaſed, and the manifeſt tokens of the Lords diſpleaſure ſo kindled) which heretofore on like occaſions, and when our ſinnes were nothing ſo fearefully multiplied, have beene poured out by us abundantly. Aske of others, aske of our owne ſoules, whether in all the judgement of men, wee be not many times further off from any ſhew or hope of repentance, than ever heretofore! Whether we doe not walke ſeven times more ſtubbornly againſt the Lord, without any regard; to provoke him thereby to walke ſeven times more ſtubbornly againſt us (as he ſpeaketh) to plague us yet ſeven times more, as hee oft repeateth it, that he will doe! Aske of all who have but the leaſt underſtanding of the waies and word of the Lord, whether this be not of all other a moſt infallible fore-runner of ſome inevitable vengeance, when men are thus made worſe, and that incurably, for all meanes, and chiefly notwithſtanding ſuch ſmart rods and dreadfull threatnings as we have had.

Amos 4.7,8,9, 10, 12. *Levit.* 26 18, &c. All Gods ſtrokes ſo multiplied to make us to ſeek him, have made us more ſenſleſſe.

And that we walke ſo much more ſtubbornly againſt him. *Levit.* 26. 18, 21, 24, 28. This of all other a moſt infallible fore-runner of vengeance, when men wax incurably worſe by ſmiting. *Amos* 4.2.12. The manner of the Lords proceeding againſt Iſrael, before her captivitie, is recorded for a preſident to us.

Let any one who is the hardeſt of beleefe, reade but the fourth Chapter of *Amos*, it is able to make his heart to tremble. Where the Lord (denouncing that wofull Captivitie of Iſrael, chiefly againſt thoſe beaſts of Baſhan, thoſe which did oppreſſe the poore, and deſtroy the needy, as beaſts without any underſtanding or feeling of their miſeries) threatneth *how he would take them away as with thornes, and their poſteritie as with fiſh-hookes:* meaning that he would cauſe all crueltie to be exerciſed upon them in their Captivitie; becauſe all other his rods would not make them to prepare themſelves to meet him by repentance. There he ſets this downe for a preſident, how he had plagued them before the time that he would ſo give them up to all kinde of miſery, to cauſe them thereby at length to meet him by repentance, if any thing could have prevailed to have prevented the ſame. As, for famine, *he had ſmitten them with cleanneſſe of teeth, and ſcarceneſſe of bread in all places, yet he complaineth that*

Amos 4.6. He had ſmitten them with famine. *verſe* 7,8,9.

With drought, blaſting and mildew. *Deut.* 28.39. In all their gardens. *Amos* 4.9. *Verſ.* 10. *Remember how many yeeres the ſtroke of the dreadfull froſt was to be ſeene in moſt of our fineſt gardens.* *Verſe* 11. Peſtilence. *Eſay.* 1.9. Young men ſlaine in warre. *Verſe.* 12. To cauſe them to prepare to meet him.

that they would not turne unto him. He had ſmitten them alſo with drought, blaſting and mildew; he had ſmitten their Gardens both great and ſmall, their Vineyards, Fig-trees and Olive-trees, yet they would not turne. For the peſtilence, he had ſtricken them with it, after the manner of Egypt, that is, that they had died in moſt terrible ſort in it. *Their young men alſo had beene ſlaine by the ſword. He had overthrowne them* (at leaſt ſome part of them) *as Sodome and Gomorrah*, or was about to doe it, like as he ſaith in *Eſay*, *and made them as a brand plucked out of the burning, yet they had not returned unto him.* And therefore he tels them plainly, that he would doe unto them, as he had denounced before, even execute all his vengeance upon them; and for that cauſe *bids them to prepare to meet him.*

Application to our ſelves of Gods manner of proceeding with Iſrael. By peſtilence, *Anno* 1603. When there died in London and places adjoyning 37054. within one yeeres compaſſe, of the peſtilence alone. Our young men fallen by the ſword. *Verſ.* 12. We almoſt overthrowne as Sodome, being as a fire-brand plucked out of the burning.

Oh give me leave here (for our good) yet once againe a little to apply theſe things to our owne ſelves. Doth not the Lord ſpeake even unto us, in all this complaint? To paſſe over the dearth, Are not we they, whom he ſmit after the manner of Egypt, with that terrible peſtilence, when hee cauſed ſuch a crie in that our great Citie of London, and in the Pariſhes belonging to it, and about it, as we cannot thinke that there was almoſt ever a greater heard in our Nation before in ſuch manner, chiefly in ſo ſhort a time, and in ſo ſmall a compaſſe, when there died of the Peſtilence alone, in the Citie of London and the places adjoyning, within the ſpace of one yeere, from the ſeventeenth of December *Anno* 1602. untill the fifteenth of December 1603. to the number of thirtie ſeven thouſand fiftie and foure. To omit all other places ſmitten then and ſince. Though he had ſaved us from our bloudie enemies, and continued us to be his people, yet thus he made us feele his hand at that time for all our rebellions. Have not our young men likewiſe heretofore fallen by the ſword, multitudes in Ireland, very many in the Low-countries? Finally, were we not as neere unto that, to have beene overthrowne, as God overthrew Sodome and Gomorrah, as ever people under heaven, and yet to eſcape; which ſo much more increaſeth the wrath. And did not God even viſibly plucke us forth of the fire as a brand, when it was readie to have conſumed us at once? Are not wee they of whom he ſpeakes,

that yet we have not returned unto him? Therefore he ſeemes plainly to tell us all, that he will doe as hee hath threatned; he will bring a heavier judgement than all the former; and bids us to prepare our ſelves to meet him, for he will not loſe his owne amongſt us; he will have his glory and be acknowledged of us as much as ever he was in former time, and more alſo, as our ſins are increaſed, or elſe he will ſmite us ſeven times more; he will bring ſome one plague greater than any ſeven, that ever we felt before. And what may we dread that to be, but to be left one day into their hand, who have ſo long thirſted after our bloud, to fall in ſome of their deſignes, by ſome ſuch a ſtratagem as their Powder-furnace was? For this (as was ſaid) is threatned as the laſt temporall plague of Gods people, the ſword and captivitie, in which all the former miſeries will be found. And this did the Lord accompliſh accordingly firſt on Iſrael, then on Iudah, as at this Captivitie: but moſt dreadfully in their laſt deſolation, and ſcattering by the Romanes after the death of our Saviour; and that they had beene ſo fully convinced by the glorious light of the Goſpell, and all his long patience which they had ſo contemned. This he hath oft times very neerely fulfilled on us; even us (I ſay) of this Nation, towards whom hee hath manifeſted as many tokens of his love and compaſſion, (like as hath beene before declared) as ever towards any other people, in the daies of the Goſpell, (all our bleſſings being conſidered together) and therefore he ſeemes to threaten as evidently, that either he will be honored of us above all other people in this laſt houre of the world, according as hee hath advanced us, or elſe that he will be magnified in power and wrath upon us above all other, and that in ſome preſent temporall plague, or in that laſt great and moſt dreadfull judgement, now hard at hand, and chiefly in vengeance upon every impenitent ſinner particularly. And thus much alſo for our perverſneſſe, and our falling away more and more.

Therefore he threatneth us with whatſoever he hath denounced, ſeeing we amend not.

He will not loſe his owne, nor his glory. *Levit.* 26. 25, 31, &c.

But will bring one plague in the end ſeven times greater than any of the former. *Lev.* 26. 31. to 36. *Deut.* 28. from 25. to 50.

This did the Lord accompliſh on his people.

As he hath often almoſt on us.

On whom he hath ſhewed ſuch tokens of his love and compaſſion, and therefore will be magnified accordingly. *Amos* 3. 2. *Matth.* 11. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.

To come now to the laſt ſigne of his vengeance ruſhing on Iudah, and for which hee could not ſpare them, to wit, their Atheiſme, I referre it to the conſcience of every one of us, as before he threatneth he cannot ſpare: to wit, Atheiſme, and how it declareth it ſelfe openly amongſt us.

The third ſigne of Gods anger, and for which

his

his glorious Majeſtie: Firſt, for that groſſe and intolerable kinde of it, whereby *they ſaid, where is the God of vengeance? Let him make ſpeed; Let him haſten his worke: Tuſh, he ſeeth not, he regardeth not*; whether we doe not match or goe beyond Iudah in it? How otherwiſe could there poſſibly be that outrage of the wicked, I meane that impudencie in outragious ſins, which ſo beareth downe before it, all religion and civill honeſtie, as a mightie ſtreame, amongſt ſo very many; if all ſuch did not thinke ſo much in their hearts, and even proclaime it, *that the Lord ſeeth them no more?* For durſt any one of them live but one day longer in any of their beaſtly vices, in their drunkenneſſe, whoredomes, oppreſſions, blaſphemies, ſcorning Gods ſervice, or any of the horrible abominations mentioned? Durſt they ſinne with ſuch braving it out, and with ſo high a hand, if they thought that the Lords eye was upon them, or that hee is the God of vengeance, and his wrath a conſuming fire? And much more if they thought of that blacke and gloomie day of the Lord, which is hying on all ſuch, and of that captivitie in the chaines of hell, from whence there will be no redemption. Secondly, if this Atheiſme had not ſtrangely poſſeſſed us, and if we were not come to thinke that all theſe judgements and warnings, which have beene upon us, were meerely by chance and fortune, and not ſent by the Lord, would they not have rouzed us out of our ſecuritie long before this day? If wee were not ſtrongly perſwaded in our ſelves, that God is not ſo angrie againſt our ſinnes, nor yet ſo ſevere in executing vengeance, as his word and meſſengers doe threaten, had wee not met him long agoe in ſack-cloth and aſhes, in faſting, weeping and mourning, as the people of Ninivie did? Had we not at ſome of our ſo ſtrange and notable fore-warnings (whereat we have beene ſo oft aſtonied, and ſo terrified for the preſent) repented of all our abominations long before this? So that we ſhould have ſought that our Land might have beene purged of them, as in *Ioſiahs* daies; that they might never have angred the Lord any more; and each of us have turned from all our evill waies, as the people of Ninivie did for the preſent, according to that knowledge which they had of the Lord?

And to draw towards an end of this point, who ſeeth not this, that

By the ſtrong ſtreame of outragious ſinnes bearing downe all before it.

By the braving out all horrible ſinnes with a high hand.

Otherwiſe being perſwaded that all our judgements were ſent from God, and of his anger againſt our ſinne: We had repented long agoe in ſackcloth and aſhes. And ſought that all our abominations might have beene taken out of our Land.

Ion. 3. 8, 10.

that many of the godliest (even many of those of us who imagine that we have the best hearts) dare not yet shew forth our religion and our love to God, as our Father *Abraham* did, and as our Lord and Saviour used; no not our love of his truth, our hatred of any of the abominations mentioned, in such manner as we ought, nor yet of other the sinnes of our time? Who observeth not this, that we dare very hardly be seene to favour, or so much as to speake unto any man, be he never so honest in the perswasion of our consciences, and his cause never so just, if he be in any little disgrace or opposed by the wicked; whereas we feare not at all to countenance any lewd man, be he never so odious and vile before the Lord, and of whom our Saviour will be ashamed before all the world? Who marketh not how almost every one bendeth his wits to frame himselfe in all things to please all, so neere as he can possibly, and to be just as the place and time requireth? Who considereth it not, that most of us have ceased to mourne any more, or any further to lay to heart the evils, no not the destroying of so many soules as daily perish through want of knowledge or by evill example, or which are in danger thereof, by falling still more and more to Popery, prophanenesse, and all ungratiousnesse, or for all the signes of Gods anger or the provocations thereof. That though wee see how these sinnes doe increase daily, namely, Popish Atheisme and all prophanenesse, with every thing that may anger the Lord; and that all true pietie and meanes to pacifie him doe decay and die, yet wee doe not feare nor tremble before him. Whence can we conjecture that all this may proceed, but that either we beginne now to thinke for most part as they did, that God doth not so regard these things, as we have imagined, otherwise Popery and all iniquity could not so prevaile and grow up, and all true godlinesse and honesty be so trodden under foot continually more and more, as they are in most places; or at least that the most should wax so careless of all. Surely it is most like, that we begin to conceit, that iniquity hath so gotten the upper hand, that it is impossible that ever piety or religion should looke up again, or be countenanced any more, as in former time; but that now wickednesse only must reigne untill the end of the world. Thus it is, and thus it must be still worse and worse, thinke

Our timorousnesse to manifest our love to the Lord, or hatred of sin.

To countenance the godly if they be in any disgrace. Though we dare countenance the vilest.

Our framing our selves to the time.

Our leaving off to mourne for all our sinnes and tokens of Gods wrath.

Or to tremble before him.

Whence doe they proceed, but of this spice of close Atheisme, that we thinke that God doth not so regard these things, or is not so angrie against sinne. *Ezek. 9. 9.*

That iniquitie hath gotten the upper hand for ever.

So we frame our selves to the world.

thinke we, and hereupon, almoſt every one thinketh it the beſt policie to frame himſelfe to pleaſe all, untill the vengeance of the Lord doe ſeiſe upon all alike. This is the very maine cauſe of our drowſie profeſſing, and of our generall declining in the beſt, to luke-warmeneſſe. Thus goe we on without regard, untill the Lord caſt us off without mercy, unleſſe we awake and pacifie him ſpeedily.

Cauſe of our drowſie profeſſing.

Concluſion.

And thus have we ſeene what juſt cauſe we all have to meet our God forthwith in moſt humble manner, in faſting and prayer; even for the exceeding greatneſſe of the ſinne of our Land, declared ſo evidently in all theſe three ſignes: *viz.* of the crie of bloud of all kindes, of Apoſtaſie and Atheiſme ſo increaſing daily, as that our Land is full of them; for which we may juſtly feare that the Lord will not nor cannot ſhew us any more mercie, unleſſe by our returning and humble ſubmiſſion we ſtay his hand. And hence alſo he ſets before our faces, what cauſe all his ſervants have to watch and to pray continually, that yet at leaſt we may each ſave our owne ſoules, though we ſhould neither ſave ſonnes nor daughters with us.

Ezek. 14. 14, 18.

CHAP.

Chap. XVI.

The true obedience of Gods faithfull meſſengers and ſervants will bring them boldneſſe to appeare before him: and this alone, when they are able to ſay in a good conſcience; Lord I have done as thou haſt commanded me. And what great cauſe all of us have to watch and pray continually, that we may alwaies be able ſo to ſpeake, thus evermore to have boldneſſe whatſoever come to paſſe, and to ſtand before the Sonne of Man.

VERSE 11. *And behold the man clothed with linnen, which had the inkehorne by his ſide,* reported the matter, ſaying, I have done as thou haſt commanded me.*

* *Returned the word, or made report and ſaid.*

IN this verſe is now contained the returne of the marking Angell, and of his commiſſion, which was to marke all the mourners before the deſtroyers came at them. How he returnes and delivereth up unto God his Commiſſion in theſe words; Lord I have done as thou haſt commanded me.

The returne of the marking Angell, and of his Commiſſion.

That he had done as the Lord had commanded him.

Herein two things offer themſelves to be carefully thought of.

Two things to be thought of here.

The firſt is for the comfort of all the faithfull, who mourne for the ſinnes, and for the wrath of the Lord, to wit, the care that our faithfull High Prieſt Chriſt Ieſus our Lord and Saviour hath for the marking of us all, who are ſuch, before the vengeance come; what deſtruction ſoever he ſhall bring upon the world. But this point hath beene handled before at large in the Commiſſion given to the marking Angell, for making ſafe all the mourners, and the comforts ariſing thereupon ſet downe in the ſeventh Chapter. And thence are we to fetch theſe conſolations belonging hereunto. Only let it not grieve us, to be put in minde of this, that the office of making us ſure before the deſtruction come, by ſetting a marke upon our fore-heads, belongeth to our High-Prieſt, who is to keepe and preſerve us by his perpetuall attonement for us before our heavenly Father.

1. The aſſurance and ſafetie of the mourners before the deſtruction come, being thus marked by our Saviour.

And

To be put in mind ever to beare his mark in our foreheads. That ſo we may alwaies have boldneſſe before him.

And that therefore we are alwaies confidently and cheerefully to carry this our marke in our fore-heads, by a bold and a holy profeſſion of him and of every part of his ſacred truth, ſo farre as he hath clearely revealed himſelfe unto us: and that we ever thus acknowledge him in our whole life and converſation. Then ſhall he be magnified in us both in life and in death. And then ſhall we not only ſhew our ſelves unto the world, to be his owne faithfull ſervants and diſciples, but alſo we ſhall nouriſh in our ſelves, and feele more ſtrong aſſurance, that wee are waſhen in his bloud, and are of the number of them which are ſealed for himſelfe. That hereby we ſhall be kept ſafe in the midſt of ten thouſand dangers ſo far as ſhall be beſt, and preſerved to his eternall kingdome and glory, to ſtand with joyfulneſſe at his glorious appearing, where we ſhall be acknowledged of him before the whole world. But for ſo many of us, as doe imagine our ſelves to be marked, and yet either dare not profeſſe him and his truth openly, or regard him not in his members, but are rather aſhamed of him; or at leaſt doe diſhonour him by our lewd converſations, we may certainly expect that he will leave us up to have our portions in all the miſeries of the wicked, as thoſe who were never marked by him. And that moreover he will be aſhamed of and deny us, at that dreadfull day of his appearing, and leave us to have our part with all the fearefull and unbeleeving, in that lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone. And thus much ſhortly for the firſt of theſe points, to wit, the ſafetie and comfort of the mourners whatſoever come to paſſe.

Apoc. 21.8.

Matt. 25.41,43.

Luke 13.27.

Luke 9.29.

Apoc. 21.8.

But for the ſecond, it is to be ſtood more upon, for the ſhuting up and inforcing all the former, that we may yeeld a ſpeedy and cheerefull obedience thereunto: *viz.* That the marking Angell having done as the Lord had commanded him, is bold to returne and to appeare before him, to deliver up this account: Lord I have done as thou haſt commanded me.

The boldneſſe of the marking Angell appearing againe before the Lord, and giving up his commiſſion.

This only can bring us boldneſſe to appeare before the Lord, when we can ſay, Lord I have done as thou haſt commanded.

Wherein the Lord would have us all to conſider well, and now in time to bethinke our ſelves, what that is which only can bring boldneſſe to any conſcience, both now preſently and in the greateſt plagues and tokens of Gods anger, which can come upon the world; as alſo at the day of our death, and finally at that day of the laſt and dreadful judgement. What it is that can

make

make us to goe to God confidently, and returne our commiſſion cheerefully. Even this, when like as the Angell ſaid, *Lord I have done as thou haſt commanded me*, ſo we can ſay in the teſtimonie of our conſciences, *O Lord according to that meaſure of grace beſtowed upon me, ſo I have in my place and calling done all that thou haſt commanded me.* It is true oh Lord, that I have had many weakneſſes, as any poore childe or ſervant of thine, through that corruption which is in me: Yet ſince the time that thou didſt touch my heart, and call me effectually, I have had a willing minde, I have beene deſirous to approve my ſelfe thy dutifull and obedient childe, to honour thee in all things, by ſeeking thy kingdome and righteouſneſſe, and alſo by doing thy will as the Angels, like as thou haſt injoyned me, ſo farre as thou haſt vouchſafed me mercy. This (as thou knoweſt) hath beene the griefe of my ſoule, that I could not doe thy commandements better and more cheerefully; but thou art the God that lookeſt at the uprightneſſe of the heart, and accepteſt the willing minde in thine, to whom thou haſt given this unfained deſire, not only to will, but alſo to ſeeke by all holy meanes to accompliſh the ſame. Behold Lord, thus in my will and in my inner man, yea with all my poore endevour and abilitie, I have done as thou haſt commanded me. For to will hath beene preſent with me, when I have found little ſtrength, nay no meanes to performe the ſame, or to effect that good which I deſired ſo as I would: But have rather found another law in my members, rebelling againſt the law of my minde, and oft carrying me captive to the law of ſinne in my members. If our conſciences beare us witneſſe hereof, even of a ſincere and an unfained care and ſtrife, which we have had, or now have to abide in obedience to our Saviour, in keeping all his commandements, and that we have done what we have beene able, or now labour to it, then have we boldneſſe, as *Iohn* ſpeaketh; firſt boldneſſe in this world, and after even when we ſhall be to appeare before the Lord to give up our account.

This we may ſee in two notable enſamples, which may be inſtead of a cloud of witneſſes. Firſt in the enſample of our bleſſed Saviour agreeable unto this type and figure, and is certainly ſet downe for our incouragement, that we through his merit, may

Our obedience is chiefly in our willingneſſe and unfained endevour, mourning for our wants, and this doth our God accept.
Neh. 1.11.
Matth. 7.20.
Acts 11.23.
Pſal. 57.7.
Eſay 42.3.
Gen. 21.16,17.
2 *Cor.* 8.12.
Pſal. 51.6.
2 *Cor.* 8.12.
Rom. 7.7. 25.18. 23.

Verſ. 18.
Verſ. 25.

This only will bring us boldneſſe to appeare before our God.
1 *Iohn* 2.28.
3.21.
4.17.

Two notable enſamples hereof.

I.

In our Saviour having finiſhed

his commiſſion in the worke of our redemption, and now to returne the ſame.
Iohn 17.4,5.
Verſ. 20.
Iohn 17.1.
Happy and tenne thouſand times happy is that ſoule, that can thus ſpeake; that he hath had this ſtudy in any meaſure of ſinceritie.
Verſe 5.
Verſ. 6.
Verſe 8.
Verſ. 12.
Verſ. 13.

may have the ſame in our meaſure. Who when he is to returne and give up his commiſſion, for the execution of his great worke, the worke of the ſalvation of all his elect, and as it were the marking of them, even of every one of us, who truly beleeve in his name; he firſt lifts up his eies unto heaven with cheerefulneſſe, and thus ſpeakes unto his father: *Father the houre is come, glorifie thy ſon, I have glorified thee on earth, I have finiſhed the worke which thou gaveſt me to doe. And now glorifie me thou father with thine own ſelf, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. I have declared thy name unto the men which thou gaveſt me. I have given them the words which thou gaveſt me; I have kept them in thy name. Thoſe which thou gaveſt me I have kept, and not one of them is loſt; but the childe of perdition. That the Scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I unto thee, &c.* Thus joyfully ſpeakes our Saviour, at the delivery up of his commiſſion. Where we may ſee all this confident rejoycing of our Lord and Maſter in conſideration of the neereneſſe of his time, now to appeare before his Father, with his expectation and claiming of the glory with his Father, to have beene chiefly in regard of the faithfull execution and diſcharge of his office and function committed unto him by his father, for the ſaving of his elect. This is written for our enſample, to aſſure us, who endevour unfainedly with all our power to follow his ſteps, that we alſo through him ſhall finde the ſame boldneſſe and rejoycing, every one according to our meaſure of faithfulneſſe in our places. For the Lord in us accepts the worke of his owne grace, for his rich mercy, and for the all-ſufficient merit of this our Lord and Saviour, to crowne it freely with immortalitie, and covers all the imperfection and corruption, having waſhen us in his bloud.

2.
The ſecond enſample in *Paul* ready to be offered up.
2 *Tim.* 4.7.

Take a ſecond enſample of faithfull *Paul*, who when he was ready to be offered up, and now ſaw the time of his departing at hand, thus he breakes forth into this triumphant ſpeech: *I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith. Henceforth is laid up for me the crowne of righteouſneſſe, which the Lord the righteous Iudge ſhall give unto me at that day, and not to me only, but alſo to all them that love his appearing.* Howſoever he ſo cry out againſt himſelfe otherwhere;

Wretched

Wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death? Becauſe, though to will was preſent with him, yet he found no means to performe that which was good [meaning in ſuch good ſort as he deſired.] And becauſe *he did not the good thing which he would have done, but the evill which he would not, that he did.* So we ſee in theſe two worthy enſamples, what made our Lord and Saviour, and this his holy ſervant ſo confident, even becauſe they had done as the Lord had commanded them, and for that they had now finiſhed their courſes in this manner, thus continuing to the end. Our Saviour abſolutely and in all perfection; *Paul* according to the meaſure of grace given unto him, whereby his faith was manifeſted to be a living faith; and for the promiſe made through Chriſt, unto all ſuch as ſo waited for his appearing.

Rom.7.24. *Verſ.18.* *Verſ.19.* *Verſ.18.*

The reaſons hereof are moſt evident, Becauſe it is faithfulneſſe unto the death (not for a day or two, but unto the death) that obtaines the crowne of life, when we can ſay, *Lord I have done as thou haſt commanded.* This ſets the crowne on our heads. It is laid up only for theſe, and for all thoſe that love that his glorious appearing: for all ſuch will with the good ſervant be ſtill thinking of their maſters comming. And therefore come he at what houre ſoever he will, he ſhall be ſure to finde them in their places and callings, and doing as he commanded. So that it cannot be but that through faith in his promiſe, they muſt needs have boldneſſe even then, when it ſhall be ſaid unto them, *Come give an account of thy ſtewardſhip,* Render up an account of thy talents: when their hearts ſhall beare them witneſſe, that they have travelled to put forth their talents to the moſt advantage for the Lord, ſo as to gaine him the moſt honour that they could; and to doe their beſt ſervice to his Church. And when withall the ſpirit ſhall bring to their remembrance, what a gratious maſter they ſerve. That if with their two talents they have gained but other two, they ſhall have the praiſe of good ſervants: and if they have beene faithfull, but even in the little committed to them, they ſhall be rulers over much, and enter into their maſters joy. They cannot but triumph as *Paul,* knowing that they are undoubtedly bleſt, that they ſhall then reſt from their labours,

Rev.2.10. Reaſons, why they only who have done as the Lord hath commanded, may be bold to appeare before him. *2 Tim.4.8.* *Mat.24.45,46, 47.* *Luk.16.2.* *Mat.25.22,23.* *Mat.25.21.23*

labours, and all their workes ſhall follow them. All which they have done in obedience to the Lords commandement, though in never ſuch weakneſſe, ſhall be accepted and rewarded. Hence it is that the Lord ſo commends this for the patience of the Saints, ſaying, *Here is the patience of the Saints.* This patient waiting for our maſters comming ſtill doing his commandements. Theſe only are thoſe Saints that ſhall be crowned with immortality; even they that wait patiently, keeping ſtill the commandements of the Lord, and the faith of Ieſus. Theſe know that they can never be confounded whilſt they have reſpect (not to one alone, but) to all Gods commandements. And therefore upon this teſtimonie of their conſciences, that they doe deſire to doe all things as the Lord commands, they ſhall alwaies have boldneſſe, and be ever crying in their Spirits, *Come Lord Ieſus, come quickly.* Finally: when all the nations of the earth ſhall tremble and ſhrike out for that glorious appearing of Ieſus Chriſt, yea and ſhall *wiſh the hils and mountaines to fall upon them to hide them from the preſence of the Lambe*, they and they alone *ſhall then lift up their heads for joy*, as for the happieſt day that did ever ſhine upon them. Becauſe then, they know, that they ſhall have the full reward of all their labours, all teares ſhall be wiped from their eies. They ſhall be then ſet at the right hand of glorie, and acknowledged before all the world. They ſhall be taken into the throne of the Lambe and crowned with glory, there to triumph for evermore. They ſhall be as the Mount Sion that cannot be removed from their confidence and patience. Yea they ſhall be bold as lions, knowing that he who hath marked them, will according to his promiſe be with them, in the midſt of the fire and in the midſt of the waters, as he was to Iſrael in the heart of the ſea; and as he was with the three children in the midſt of the hot fierie furnace, and to his ſeruant *Daniel* in the mouthes of the lions, ſo farre as ſhall be beſt every way, and moſt for his owne glory, their ſalvation, and the good of all his people.

Whereas contrarily all thoſe who have beene unfaithfull in the charge and duties laid upon them, and in diſpenſing and imploying the talents committed unto them, ſhall ever have

*Apoc.*14.12.

*Pſal.*119.

When all nations ſhall tremble and ſhrike, they and they alone ſhall lift up their heads for joy, becauſe of that their happieſt day. Their eſtate then.
*Apoc.*3.21.

*Prov.*28.1.
Eſay 43.2.
The contrary horrour of all who have not regarded to doe as the Lord hath commanded them.
Bethinke your ſelves in time you that now regard not the commandements of the Lord.

have horrour, and nothing elſe but horrour, ſo ſoone as their conſciences ſhall be rightly awaked both in this world and ever after; for when they ſhall once be thorowly rouzed, either by the word of the Lord, or by any ſudden whirlwinde of his vengeance ruſhing upon them, or when they but thinke of his anger, and eſpecially of their appearing before him to give up their account, then ſhall they be as *Cain*, chaſed in their conſciences, and runagates to the grave. They ſhall never finde any more peace after, for deſpiſing the peace and mercie of the Lord offered unto them; unleſſe he deale with any of them extraordinarily in mercie to bring them, yet whilſt they are in this life, to behold the true braſen ſerpent, and even, as it were, to weepe teares of bloud for piercing their Lord and Saviour. And at the day of death they would wiſh that they might live ſtill in this world, though toades or ſerpents, or the vileſt creatures that ever God made, ſo that they might never come to appeare before him. Or elſe that they might die the moſt miſerable death that ever any died, and ſuffer as much torment (if it were poſſible) as ever all wretched ſinners did, ſo that they might be ſhut at once. Yea which is more fearefull; if it were to be made blockes, to be laid at the backe of a fire, and there to burne, they would be glad to chuſe it to eſcape that everlaſting burning and torment of all parts, both of ſoule and body in the infernall lake burning with fire and brimſtone. But above all, at the glorious appearing of the Lambe, then ſhall their terrour be full. Then ſhall they *cry to the hils and mountaines to fall upon them to daſh them in peeces, ſo that they might any way be covered and hid from the preſence of the Lambe*: That Lambe of whoſe mildneſſe they have gloried, and by whoſe bloud they have hardned themſelves to live in all their impietie. The comming of him ſhall be ſo dreadfull, the very ſight of him ſhall be ſo terrible for their deſpiſing him and trampling his bloud under their feet.

Prov. 1.27.
Gen 4.13,14.
When their conſciences ſhall be awaked they ſhall be as *Cain*.
Eſay 57.20,21.
And never finde more peace.
Iohn 3.14, 15.
Zach. 12.10. & 13.1.
At death to wiſh to live as toades or the vileſt creatures, rather than to appeare before the Lord:
Or die the cruelleſt death to be ſhut.
Or to lie in one of our fires perpetually to eſcape that burning.
Wiſh the hils to fall upon them and hide them from the preſence of the Lambe.
Apoc. 6.15,16, 17.
Apoc. 6.16.
Heb. 10.29.

The reaſons alſo of all this horrour are evident: Becauſe the Lord will certainly come; he will come at a day and at an houre when he is not looked for, and then will he aske an account of their ſtewardſhips, even of everie one that hath dwelt upon the

Reaſons of their horrour.
Mat. 24. 45,46, 47, *to* 51.
The Lords ſudden and terrible comming. *Luk.* 16.2. The ſtrict account of their ſtewardſhips.

earth, whether he hath done and finiſhed the worke for which he came into the world; whether he hath done as he hath beene commanded. Then for all thoſe who have neglected their callings, and that ſervice which the Lord had enjoyned them, and have given over themſelves to the ſervice of ſinne and Satan, following their owne luſts, he will cut them off, and give them their portions with hypocrites, where ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth. But as he will require this of all the people of the earth, whether they have done as he hath commanded; ſo more ſtrictly and ſeverely of all who live in his Church, to whom he hath given his word and commandements particularly, with whom he hath in ſpeciall manner vouchſafed to make his Covenant to be their God, requiring of them this condition, that they ſhall be his loyall people: who have likewiſe ſolemnly entred this Covenant with him at their baptiſme, and therein bound themſelves by an holy oath to doe all that he ſhould command them; unto whom he hath thereupon committed his chiefe treaſure, his word and ſacraments. He will therefore require a moſt ſtraight account of them, how they have performed that their ſolemne covenant; and how they have diſcharged that commiſſion which they undertooke; whether they have done as he commanded them: how they have imployed their talents committed unto them, what each hath gained with his ſeverall talents. Then (as we all know) everie one who hath not done as he was commanded, nor imploied his talent ſo as to gaine by it; to make ſome advantage to his Maſter with it, and alſo to increaſe it, muſt be adjudged as an evill, a ſloathfull and unprofitable ſervant, and caſt into utter darkneſſe, where is weeping and gnaſhing of teeth. Oh what ſhall be then the ſtate of every wretched ſinner, if he hath not only hid his talent, ſo as he hath made no advantage to his Lord, but which is many times worſe, if he have uſed his talents and all that he hath had againſt his Lord and Maſter, to his diſhonour, and to the provoking and angring of him, with the hurt of his ſervants? And which is yet more fearefull, if he have imploied all to the continuall ſervice of ſinne and Satan, both his riches, credit, wit, ſtrength, learning, friends, his pretious time, and the like; what then ſhall his

Mat. 24. 48, 49, 50, 51.

State of them who have neglected their callings, and that which hath been commanded them.

This account muſt be asked moſt ſeverely of all who live in the Church.

How fearefull the condition of thoſe men is, who have not gained with their talents, nor increaſed them.

And more of them, who have uſed them againſt the Lord.

And for Satan.

his case be? When for every one of these must be made a most dreadfull reckoning, and the more hath beene committed to any one, so much more terrible must his doome and torment be. And to ascend yet a little higher, when all this account and the judgement for it, shall be given before the whole world. The execution also of the most righteous vengeance of the Lord for the same, to be in Tophet, the lake burning with fire and brimstone. *The burning whereof is fire and much wood, and the breath of the Lord as a river of brimstone to kindle it.* Where *all the fearfull and unbeleeving, all the abominable, murderers, whooremongers, sorcerers and all liers must have their portions.* Yea where *all transgressours* as *Esay* speaketh, even all obstinate and impenitent sinners who have not done as the Lord hath commanded them, or earnestly contended thereunto, must have their part for evermore. There they must be tormented both soules and bodies, which sinned together, *where their worme never dieth, nor their fire shall ever goe out.* How then can it be that any one impenitent sinner who hath continued despising or wilfully neglecting the commandements of the Lord, should ever have any boldnesse so long as they doe so remaine? How can it be but that they must needs have this horrour, even the trembling and shivering of *Felix* and *Balthazzar*, at the very conceit or the thinking of the giving up of this answer, and of their standing before this terrible God, who will take such a straight account of every one high and low, whether he have done as he was commanded, and have finished his worke. Most evident therefore is that which the Lord denounceth, *that the wicked shall not be able to stand in the judgement*, none but the righteous whose meditation and delight have beene in the law and commandement of the Lord, to doe as he hath bidden them.

Their case of all other will be most fearefull to whom most hath been committed. *Luke* 12.48. How the terrour shall be increased by the place of their account, and of the execution of vengeance on them in Tophet. *Esay* 30.33. *Revel.* 21.8. *Esay* 66.24. The place of all wilful transgressours. No impenitent sinner can possibly looke to stand before the Lord. *Psal.* 1.5. Remember *Felix, Balthazzar.* *Acts* 24.26. *Dan.* 5.5,6. *Psal.* 1.5. *Psal.* 1.2.

Now to come to the application hereof, and so to draw towards the shutting up of all. And first to speake to all them who have either despised or neglected the commandement or service of the Lord, or who have abused, or but so much as hid the talents committed to them. Oh what will you doe when you must returne and give up your account, whether you have done in all things as the Lord hath commanded you? This you must

Application to all who have neglected to doe as the Lord hath commanded. What they will doe at their account. To this they must come.

muſt come unto. Before the great and glorious Tribunall muſt you ſtand, though you had as much to purchaſe a freedome for your not appearing, as Sathan offered unto our Saviour, even all the kingdomes of the earth.

1. Application to the chiefe, to put them in remembrance. As their anſwer muſt be the greateſt for their place and charge. *Luk.* 12.48. *Pſal.* 82.1.

To begin therefore at all the chiefe, to put even them in remembrance, in the firſt place, of that great and dreadfull reckoning, according to the bounden dutie of a poore ſervant of the Lord both unto the higheſt Majeſtie, and unto them all. To the end that they principally may bethinke themſelves of their appearance and anſwer; which muſt be of all other the greateſt, as moſt hath beene committed unto their charge, and as they have beene in the higheſt place, even in the place of the Lord himſelfe. And alſo that all of them, who have not regarded the commandement nor that appearing, may begin to prepare, and ſet themſelves in time to doe as the Lord hath given them in commiſſion, that they may have boldneſſe at that day.

That they may have boldneſſe.

This is a little reſemblance of ſome ſmall part of that account which the Lord will then require. *Luk.* 16.2.

Oh ye who have neglected your commiſſions, what will ye doe when that day ſhall come ſuddenly upon you, and that terrible voice ſhall ſound in your eares; Come give an account of your ſtewardſhips and of your commiſſions. Have ye done as I have commanded you? Have you beene faithfull in that which I have committed unto you? What will you anſwer, when the great and mightie God the Lord of hoaſts, ſhall ſpeake to this effect (before all his holy Angels, and before all the world) to every Magiſtrate according to his place; for after the tenour of the commiſſion committed generally to the Magiſtrate, ſhall it be demanded of all of them, Thou whom I have ſet in my throne in the earth, as my lieutenant, and graced with mine owne name, to execute my judgements for me, only for my honour and for the wealth of my people; Haſt thou done as I commanded thee, and as thou didſt undertake, when thou tookeſt upon thee this Commiſſion and charge, and entredſt this ſpeciall covenant with me? Haſt thou ſought by all meanes to promote my Religion and my pure worſhip amongſt all my people, which I have committed unto thy truſt, and to cauſe it to flouriſh amongſt them? Haſt thou uſed to this end all thy underſtanding and ſtudy, thy power & authoritie which I have beſtowed upon thee for this purpoſe? Haſt thou endevoured to compell every

The Magiſtrates Commiſſion, and what the Lord will call for at his hands. *Pſal.* 82.1.6. 2 *Chron.* 19.6. *Watch. part.* 1. *p.* 66. 2 *Chr.* 15.12,13. For making Gods religion to flouriſh. 2 *Chr.* 34.30,31. 32,33,34. *Deut.* 5.26.

one

one of them to the obedience and service of my great name, to the wealth of them, and of their children and posteritie for ever? Hast thou laboured for the utter defacing and destroying of all false worship and superstition, with all the meanes and occasions thereof, and that out of every place, so farre as I have extended the bounds of thy authoritie, as my faithfull servants have beene wont to doe? Hast thou shewed thy detestation of all the abominations which my soule so much abhorreth, and sought the utter destroying of them and rooting them out; even those for which I had almost made you as Sodome, and as Gomorrah, and for which I have beene so oft ready to leave you, and must in the end unlesse you repent speedily? Hast thou discountenanced all the wicked, and sought to chase them away with thine eies? And for mine own people and children, which love my name, and doe endevour to keepe my covenant, walking in all my lawes, those which of all others I have commended unto thy care and faithfulnesse, that by all meanes thou shouldest procure their wealth, as thou lovest me; for whose sake chiefly I have set thee in mine owne place, hath thy care beene for them above all others? Have thine eies beene unto them that they might dwell with thee? Hast thou had the affections of a tender nursing father towards those which are so deare and pretious unto me, that they are ever in my sight, and that he that toucheth them toucheth the apple of mine eie? Hast thou represt the wicked that they should not any way hurt or annoy them? Have these things beene in thy heart, and thy chiefe meditation and desire day and night? And in thy government hast thou had courage for me, fearing me, and me only in thy place? Hast thou not accepted the persons of the great men, nor rewards, but dealt truly and faithfully as executing my judgements in my place for me alone? Come give up thy account.

Destroying all false worship.

Taking away all abominations. *2 Chr.* 43. 33.

Discountenancing all the wicked. *Psal.* 101. 6, 7. *Prov.*

Countenancing only and succouring the good. *Psal.* 101. 6. *Esa.* 49. 13. 15, 16.

Having the affections of a tender nursing father. *Zach.* 2. 8. *Iob* 29. 12. *Psal.* 1. 2.

Ful of courage. *Deut.* 16. 19, 20. *Exo.* 18. 21. *Deut.* 1. 17.

Not accepting persons nor gifts. *2 Chr.* 19. 6.

Secondly for the Iudges, when he shall say unto them more particularly, amongst the rest of the Gods of the earth; Have you done according to your commission and charge from me? Have you judged justly? Have you heard the cause of the poore, the widow and the fatherlesse, and of those who have neither had lawyer nor money to speake for them; and when you have not

The Iudges commission.

Iob 29.16. *Iob* 29.12. *Iob* 25.15. not knowne their cauſe, have you ſought it out diligently? Have you beene careſull to deliver the poore from their oppreſſours, to helpe them to right that ſuffered wrong? Have you beene a mouth for the dumbe, eies for the blinde? Have you had a tongue for me and for my children? Or hath your eie turned after rewards, after riſing and favour? Have you puniſhed every ſinne without partialitie, labouring to cut off all workers of iniquitie, the great as well as the ſmall? Or have your hearts beene only for your covetouſneſſe, for your pompe and dignitie, to make your poſteritie great in the earth, or but to ſerve out your time? Come every one give up your account.

Pſal. 101.8.

The Miniſters commiſſion.

Thirdly for the Miniſters, when he ſhall ſay to every one of them, where are all the ſoules that I have committed unto thee? Thoſe which thou haſt taken the charge of to feed, and to keepe from hell, by guiding them in my waies. Come ſet them here before me. Haſt thou watched over them faithfully, to ſave every one of them by teaching, admoniſhing, exhorting and comforting them? Haſt thou *beene inſtant as I charged thee, in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon,* ſeeking *and warning every one with teares?* Haſt thou laboured to be a patterne unto them, and to become all unto all, to the end thereby to winne and ſave the moe? Haſt thou beene afraid of giving the leaſt offence to hinder the ſalvation of any one of them? Or haſt thou not cared for any of theſe things, more then for a faſhion and for thy credit, but lien and ſlept and delighted in ſleeping, having had thy heart ſtill running after thy covetouſneſſe? Come give up thy account.

2 *Tim.* 4.1,2. *Acts* 20. 1 *Cor.* 9.19,20.

The account of every governour of a family for every ſoule within his gates.

Or when he ſhall ſay to every governour of a family, whether father or maſter, or whatſoever; Where are thoſe ſoules that I have committed unto thy truſt? Haſt thou taught and commanded thy children and houſhold, as my ſervant *Abraham* did, to keepe juſtice and judgement, and to walke in all my waies? Haſt thou given them good enſample in walking ſo before them? haſt thou compelled them to obedience and to ſubmit themſelves unto me, and ſeene that every one within thy gates have kept my Sabbaths and all my ordinances that it might goe well with them? Or haſt thou only looked for thine owne ſervice and never regarded me herein? Come give up thy account.

Gen. 18.17,19. *Deut.* 5.29.

Finally,

Finally, when the Lord ſhall ſay to every man; Where are the talents which I have committed unto thee? what haſt thou done with all thy wealth, which I gave thee in truſt to imploy it for me? How haſt thou uſed thy wit and learning, thy credit, thy ſtrength and thy authoritie? Haſt thou imploied them all for me and for my people? Haſt thou ſought by them to further my pure religion and worſhip, that I might be better knowne and ſerved amongſt my people? Haſt thou beſtowed thy wealth chiefly to the furtherance of my Goſpell, the releeving of my needy members? Haſt thou bent thy wit, thy learning, and thy principall ſtudie to walke before me in every holy dutie, and to bring others unto the ſame; to ſpeake for me, for my truth and ſervants; and thy ſtrength to doe me ſervice cheerefully; thy credit and authoritie to countenance my truth, and my children and ſervants in all their diſtreſſes? for undoubtedly to this effect will the Lord ſpeake to every ſoule. Though indeed this be but a little ſhadow and a ſmall reſemblance of the leaſt part of that dreadfull account, which muſt be required of all impenitent ſinners, and that in moſt ſtrict manner at that day.

The account of every one to whom he hath committed any talent.

Tremble all you that ſpend wealth and wit, and all upon vanitie.

Mat. 25. 26, 27.

And then if any ſhall begin to anſwer, as the greateſt part doe now flatter themſelves in their owne ſinne, and ſhall either ſay as *Saul* to *Samuel*, *I have fulfilled the commandement of the Lord*; or as thoſe which ſhall ſay, *Lord, we have eaten and drunken in thy preſence. Thou haſt taught in our ſtreetes. And when ſaw we thee an hungred, &c.* And the Lord ſhall reply againe, as *Samuel* doth to *Saul*, *What meaneth then the bleating of the ſheepe, and the lowing of the oxen in my eares?* What meane the loud cries of your ſinnes which have come up unto me? what will they ſay then? when the Lord ſhall reply unto the evill Magiſtrates and aske, If you have done as I have commanded you, how then hath it come to paſſe, that my religion hath beene ſo generally contemned under you, and gone ſo backward every where? How is it that Atheiſme, Poperie, and all manner of profaneneſſe, have ſo exceedingly overgrowne all, that in very many places little elſe hath appeared? How is it that all parts under your authoritie have beene ſo defiled with all horrible abominations, that the very earth is againe corrupt as before the floud?

How the Lord will reply to them that begin to excuſe themſelves untill their mouthes be ſtopped.

1 *Sam.* 15. 13.

Luc. 13. 26.

O you who now ſo much juſtifie your ſelves, ſee what you will anſwer the Lord at that day.

Matth. 25. 44.

1 *Sam.* 15. 14.

The Lords reply to all evill Magiſtrates.

To the corrupt Iudges.

When he ſhall likewiſe ſay unto the corrupt Iudges; If you have

Pſal. 12. 5.

have judged juſtly, how hath it come to paſſe that there have beene ſuch cries continually, for oppreſſion, violence, and crueltie, and none to releeve; ſo many of my poore ſervants, who have accounted it their beſt refuge and ſafetie, only to complaine to me, and to put up all the wrongs of the wicked, as having none other to releeve them? How is it that the ſighes of the poore, the widow and the fatherleſſe, have aſcended to me daily, and that all the foundations of the earth have beene moved in your time?

Pſal. 82. 5.

To the unfaithfull Miniſters.

So when he ſhall ſay likewiſe unto all the unfaithfull Miniſters; If you have done my commandements, by watching faithfully over the flockes committed unto you, teaching and warning every ſoule, and ſeeking to ſave all, how is it that there hath beene ſuch a generall cry of the bloud of their ſoules? How hath ſuch palpable ignorance and darkneſſe covered your congregations, as though the light of my Goſpell had never ſhined amongſt them; and thereby ſuch multitudes of your people periſhing for lacke of knowledge? whence hath there beene ſuch committing of ſinne with greedineſſe, and ſuch wallowing in it, within your charges? Every one of thoſe fooliſh ſinners deſtroying their owne ſoules thereby, ſome one way, ſome another. As if your people had never knowne what ſinne had meant, nor ever heard of my anger or my plagues due unto it: or as if they had never ſo much as heard of any judgement or place of torment for their ſinne, much leſſe beene warned by you day by day. If thou haſt beene ſo faithfull, where are thy children, which being begotten by the word of life, through thy miniſterie, have beene trained up by thee, to walke conſcionably in all my covenant, and which have beene kept and nouriſhed therein continually by thy paines? Set them here before me.

To the governours of families.

Alſo for the heads and governours of families, when he ſhall reply and ſay unto each of them; If thou haſt had ſuch a care for all within thy gates, how is it that thy family hath beene generally ſo unreformed, thy ſervants and children as ready to diſhonour me as any other, and to run with the lewdeſt, though vpon my Sabbaths, to any diſorder? where have thy praiers beene with thy houſhold, thoſe morning and evening ſacrifices,

which

which ſhould be amongſt my faithfull people perpetually? where hath thy Catechizing beene, the private inſtruction of thine, and daily examination to try their continuall growth? where are the ſoules of thy ſervants of which thou canſt ſay, as *Abraham*; That thou haſt gained them unto me: thoſe thy children and ſervants, which have walked in my truth, to adorne my Goſpell? Where is that Church that ſhould have been in thy houſe, as in every family of my people?

To all for imploying their talents, by trying their advantage.

And to ſhut up this point: for thee who braggeſt that thou haſt imploied thy talent ſo well, What advantage haſt thou made therewith? what honour haſt thou gotten to my name and Goſpell, or what ſpeciall good haſt thou procured for my people, or done any way in the place wherein thou haſt lived? Thou to whom I gave ſuch ſtore of worldly goods, what haſt thou voluntarily beſtowed towards the better maintaining my worſhip, or the preaching of my Goſpell, either in the place of thine owne aboad, or in others adjoyning, for the ſaving of the poore ſoules neere unto thee? What haſt thou done for the furtherance of ſchooles, which are the nurſeries of all good learning and vertue; wherein is the chiefe hope of the propagating and continuance of my Church and Goſpell? what haſt thou done for the bodily releefe and ſuſtenance of the poore, eſpecially my needy members? where are thoſe of them, of whom thou haſt had any regard, to inquire after their eſtate, to refreſh their bowels in all the times of the extreme dearths, which I have ſent upon you to prove you, and to turne you from your ſinne, or as I have offered thee other occaſions, ſhewing thee their neceſſities? Haſt thou not beſtowed thy wealth, even my gifts which I credited thee withall, on pride and exceſſe of vanitie, to glut thy ſelfe in thy pleaſures; ſpending waſtfully and ſinfully upon thy wretched carkaſſe, even that which might have cauſed the backes and bellies of many poore ſoules to have bleſſed thee: of whom yet thou haſt had no more compaſſion, than that rich glutton (now in torments) had of poore *Lazarus*, by whoſe enſample I admoniſhed thee; nor haſt yet ſo much as once thought of them, of their ſighes and teares? Haſt thou not rather oppreſſed and ſpoiled them, and even eaten them up at thy pleaſure, to ſerve thy unſatiable covetouſneſſe and pompe? Haſt thou

thou not made thee merry, and ſo fed thy ſelfe in ſcoffing at all that feare my great name? yea, haſt thou not made that my wealth which I gave thee for theſe uſes, the principall ſupporters and meanes to practiſe all thy wickedneſſe, as the prodigall ſonne did, or to oppreſſe and vex the poore at thy pleaſure, to diſhonour and provoke me to my face? And for thy wit and learning, credit and authoritie, ſhew here before me, before men and Angels, what haſt thou done and gained unto me, in maintaining or furthering my truth and Goſpell, defending and promoting all true pietie and devotion, in the place where thou haſt lived, and in drawing others to the love of me, of my religion and ſervants, to their everlaſting ſalvation? Or rather what haſt thou not done, in bending thy wit and uſing thy learning to the contrary, even to the diſcountenancing and diſcrediting of all ſincere practiſe and power of religion and of true godlineſſe, which is only pleaſing unto mee? Or at leaſt, haſt thou not done all only for thy ſelfe and for thine own advantage and purpoſe, never regarding me? Give up thy accounts.

To the learned for their talents.

Now for the truth of all theſe, aske of the word of the Lord; aske of any one knowing and beleeving the ſame, whether the Lord will not certainly thus call for the returne of every ones commiſſion, and for every ones account? Whether alſo he will not proceed with all ſorts to this effect? And that therefore none who live in any of the former abominations, or in a wilfull neglect of the Lords covenant, or of any part thereof, can ever have boldneſſe to ſtand before his judgement ſeat; nor yet any but thoſe only who can ſay, Lord I have done as thou haſt commanded me. Aske theſe things of thine owne ſoule rightly humbled as in his preſence.

Aſſurance that the Lord will thus proceed in taking every mans account of his commiſſion, and that none but ſuch can ever ſtand before him.
Pſal. 1.5.
Matth. 22.14. & 25,26,27,28.30.
Revel. 6. 15,16, 17.
Ezek. 18. 10.21.

But here may many juſtly cry out: Oh if it be ſo, who then can ſtand before this moſt righteous and dreadfull Iudge? For who can ſay thus as the Angell ſaith here, Lord I have done as thou haſt commanded me?

Ob. of the weake Chriſtian, Who can be able to ſtand before the Lord, and to ſay thus.

To this I anſwer, That every one whoſe heart beareth him witneſſe, that he hath unfainedly endevoured himſelfe, both in his minde, conſcience, will and affections, and alſo earneſtly, within his place and calling, to doe as the Lord hath commanded him, ſhall be able to returne this anſwer. Each ſhall be able thus

A. Every one who hath unfainedly ſtriven hereunto.

to

to ſay, whoſe heart hath beene ſo humbled for his wants and weakneſſes in doing the Lords commandements, that he hath beene driven daily to ſeeke pardon in the bloud of Chriſt, for all his unperfect ſervice. Every one who hath laboured to ſtirre up his owne ſoule, to performe all which the Lord hath bidden him, in better manner than he hath done. And ſo each who hath felt in himſelfe ſome growth in ſtrength and abilitie, from time to time, to the better fulfilling of that which the Lord hath injoyned him, ſhall be able to returne this happy anſwer.

Reaſons hereof. Watch part 1. pag. 34. Rule 8. 9.

The evidence and reaſon hereof we may ſee in the rules of comfort belonging to the Chriſtian ſoule in his examination. Becauſe in all ſuch who endevour and ſtrive to doe in all things as the Lord commands, without hypocriſie, he as a moſt tender father accepts their imperfect obedience, not looking upon their wants or weakneſſes: He approves of this very ſtrife and endevour to obey. For ſo doth that worthy ſervant of God *Nehemiah* ground his prayer: *Oh Lord I beſeech thee let thine eare be attentive to the praier of thy ſervant, & to the praier of thy ſervants who deſire to feare thy name*, ſaying, not who feare thy name, but *who deſire to feare thy name.* Herein like as he accepted of the obedience of faithfull *Abraham*, to whom he ſaid, Becauſe thou haſt done this, and haſt not ſpared thine only ſonne, therefore I will ſurely bleſſe thee. When as he had not offered up his ſonne in deed, as he bade him, but only had in full purpoſe and affection of heart reſolved to do it, and was about to do it; even ſo he accepts us in all our obedience, according to that meaſure of grace which we have, and not that which we have not; ſo that there be firſt a willing minde. If there be a ſtriving and contending, yea a hungring after a greater meaſure of obedience, till we come to a perfect man, even the meaſure of the age of the fulneſſe of Chriſt. And for our imperfections in doing his cõmandements, through our weakneſſe by reaſon of our fleſh, he will ſpare us (as *Malachi* ſpeaketh) even as a man ſpareth his owne ſon that ſerveth him.

1.
For the Lords acceptance of our imperfect obedience.
Neh. 1. 11.
Mal. 3. 17.
Gen. 22. 17.

2 *Cor.* 8. 12.

Mat. 5. 6.

Eph. 4. 13, 14.

Gal. 5. 17.
Mal. 3. 17.
Rom. 7. 25.

Secondly, *Becauſe his grace is ſufficient for us*, yea is moſt fully ſufficient not only to forgive whatſoever ſinne we have committed, but alſo that, wherein we are too ſhort in doing his commandements, and withall to give us the abſolute obedience of his owne ſonne. His grace is all-ſufficient for us, to ſupply daily that

2.
Becauſe his grace is ſufficient for us.
2 *Cor.* 12. 9.

2 *Cor.* 8. 12.

3. Becauſe thus he perfects and manifeſteth his owne power and mercie.

1 *Cor.* 1. 30.

Object. 2. *Viz.* The cry of all ſorts of ſinners whoſe conſciences ſhall be awaked, when they ſhall bethinke them of this appearing; What they ſhal doe?

Acts 2. 37.

The Lords anſwer to all ſuch.

Dan. 4. 24. As *Daniel* to *Nabuchadnezzar.*

What the Lord commands the poore ſinner in the firſt place.

that which is wanting in our obedience. Thus he accepts of us (as was ſaid) according to that ſtrength which he hath vouchſafed us, ſo long as we ſtir up our hearts to ſerve him more cheerfully. And thus he perfects and manifeſts his owne power and mercie in the weakneſſe of all his ſervants, that he alone may be magnified, and we humbled continually; and that we rejoycing, may ever rejoyce in the Lord.

But notwithſtanding all this, me thinkes I ſhould yet heare multitudes to cry out here, in this manner: What ſhall we doe, that we may be able to appeare and to ſtand before this holy God, ſeeing we are indeed guilty of many of theſe abominations, and innumerable other tranſgreſſions, and have not, as yet, ſo much as truly thought of this, to doe as the Lord hath commanded us, much leſſe have we done ſo! What ſhall we do who have only ſtriven to ſerve the time, and to ſatisfie our pleaſures, but have caſt the commandements of the Lord behinde our backes, or made a ſcorne of them, which is farre worſe? we ſee there is no eſcaping, nor flying away, appeare we muſt! Thus me thinkes I ſhould even heare againe, not as the cry of thoſe three thouſand, who when they heard, how they had crucified the Lord Ieſus, cried out; Men and brethren what ſhall we doe? but of many thouſands, even hundreth thouſands.

To all ſuch I anſwer, even to every one whoſe heart the Lord ſhall in mercy vouchſafe to touch; The Lord himſelfe tels thee what thou ſhouldeſt doe. Yet whilſt it is to day hearken unto him in all that he commands thee. Doe as *Daniel* counſelled *Nabuchadnezzar*: Breake off thy ſinnes forthwith by repentance, and all thine iniquities by turning to the covenant of thy God. Now begin to doe as he commands thee. Neither thinke it enough though thou ſhouldeſt repent of, and leave all the ſinnes that ever thou haſt committed, unleſſe thou alſo ſet thy ſelfe to doe all the duties, which thou haſt omitted, even all that ever he hath commanded thee, both thou and thine, ſo farre as thou art able.

What is it then wilt thou ſay, which the Lord in the firſt place commands now preſently to be done of us, that we may finde this boldneſſe to appeare, and be delivered from this our woefull eſtate?

Anſw.

Answ. To thee I answer: This is that which the Lord requires, that every such a one humble himselfe before his glorious Majestie, confessing his wretchednesse, in fasting, weeping and mourning, crying for pardon in and through his beloved Sonne Christ Iesus; and so that he withall lay fast hold upon that mercy offered in his bloud; and doe againe give and consecrate himselfe henceforth unto his holinesse all his daies, to doe all his commandements, whatsoever he will have him to doe. Thus did *Paul* that chosen vessell: who so soone as ever our Saviour had appeared unto him, and shewed him his hainous sinne, in raging against his Majestie, and had smitten him downe to the earth by his terrible presence, continued fasting, praying and mourning. He did neither eat nor drinke for three daies, untill he found comfort, that the Lord had forgiven him; and so offering himselfe and his service unto him, he resolves thenceforth, that whatsoever the Lord said unto him, that he would doe. So did he immediatly and ever after unto his end. This was that which caused him to be received to mercy. And this was it that brought him that boldnesse, to appeare to give up his account, and that confident rejoycing in remembrance thereof, saying; *Henceforth is laid up for me the crowne of righteousnesse, &c.*

Acts 9.9.

Acts 9.6.

Acts 9.10,11. 17.

1 Tim. 1.13.

2 Tim. 4.8.

But here will Sathan shew himselfe labouring now to drive all such to endlesse despaire, whom he hath formerly hardned to despise Gods commandements; and so will he seeke to make them uncapable of mercie. For this will Sathan be suggesting to terrifie the poore soule: How canst thou damned catiffe ever looke that terrible God in the face? Thou who hast by thy abominable sinnes, not only murthered thy selfe, or some one or two, but hast so farre forth dishonoured and provoked him, as thou seest; and sought to draw downe his vengeance on all sorts, and even to destroy thy whole nation? How canst thou looke to finde any mercy? Hast thou not rejected his commandements and covenant, all thy life long, wherein he hath called, and even cried stretching out his hand unto thee, offering thee mercie continually, which thou hast despised? Canst thou therefore imagine, that he should have now one drop of mercie for thee, but rather laugh, when thy

The endevour of Satan here to drive all such to endlesse despaire.

1. For the hainousnesse of their sinnes.

thy deſtruction commeth on thee ſuddenly as a whirlwinde? unto this diſtreſſed ſoule, thus ſmitten downe, I anſwer for the lifting up and comforting thereof, and that in the name of the Lord, and according to his word, That if yet at length thou canſt yeeld unto him, and reſolve hereafter to doe all that he ſhall command thee, he will ſhew thee mercie whatſoever thou art.

How to comfort the poore ſinner againſt Satans aſſaults and terrours, if he can be humbled.

I. Againſt the aſſault for the hainouſneſſe of his ſinne. If he can but now doe as God commands, *viz.* repent and beleeve in Chriſt, *Zach.* 12.10. 13.1.

And firſt for the hainouſneſſe of thy ſinne: though thou hadſt committed not one of theſe monſtrous ſinnes alone, but all theſe abominations, yet if thou canſt but finde this grace to doe as the Lord commands thee now, thou ſhalt alſo finde mercie. That is, if thou canſt firſt caſt downe thy ſelfe at his foot-ſtoole, in the ſenſe of thy vileneſſe, and withall begge mercie and pardon in Chriſt, whom by thy ſinne thou haſt pierced, looking at him mourning; and ſecondly, if thou canſt now reſolve and endevour to honour him by thy new obedience, as much as ever thou haſt diſhonoured him by thy former diſobedience, he will cleane put all thy ſinnes out of his remembrance. Conſider *Manaſſes*, as wicked a man as thy ſelfe can poſſibly be, or as any almoſt that ever lived; who beſides all the notorious abominations, wherewith he was defiled, had moreover deſtroied Gods religion, and ſet up Idolatrie, and withall done what he could to make all Gods people as wicked as himſelfe; yet when in his tribulation he praied unto the Lord and humbled himſelfe greatly, God was intreated of him, and forgave his ſinne. Call to minde ſecondly, that bloudy perſecuting *Saul*, who as a hunger-bitten lion, purſued the ſilly Lambes of Chriſt, and cauſed his poore Saints to blaſpheme; ſo raging and fighting againſt the Lord himſelfe: yet when it pleaſed his Majeſtie to ſmite him downe to the earth by the brightneſſe and terrour of his glorious preſence, and by making him to have ſome ſenſe of his owne miſerable eſtate, how even then he raiſed him up againe by the right hand of his mercie, after that he could ſay, Who art thou Lord? And what wilt thou that I ſhall doe? when he could continue faſting, mourning, and crying unto the Lord for the pardon of his ſinne; the Lord in his due time gives a comfortable anſwer to his heart, and makes him a mirrour of his mercie. He makes him a choiſe

Ezek. 18. 21, 22. *Manaſſes* is ſet forth for the example of ſuch. 2 *Chr.* 33. 3, 4, 9.

2 *Chr.* 33. 11, 12, 13.

Acts 9. 1, 2. So *Paul* the greateſt of all ſinners. *Verſ.* 3, 4, 5.

Verſ. 9, 11.

veſſell

veſſell to beare his name before the Gentiles and children of Iſrael. And which is the higheſt degree of mercie, though he was as he ſaith of himſelfe, the chiefe of all ſinners, yet the Lord ſhewed him this abundant kindneſſe, to make him a worthy example of the infiniteneſſe of his rich grace, in his beloved Sonne. That all poore wretched ſinners humbling themſelves before Ieſus Chriſt as he did, and laying ſure hold on him by a living faith, might finde like compaſſion and favour as he did.

Verſ.15.

1 Tim.1. 14,15, 16.

Thus it pleaſed the Lord to declare in him how true that ſaying is, that *Ieſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſuch miſerable ſinners.* Thereby alſo the Lord would have all men to ſee, that in ſetting the ſinne and miſerable eſtate of wretched ſinners before their faces, and in throwing them downe to hell, he ſeekes nothing elſe but to bring them to heaven. If therefore thou canſt but doe as the Lord commands thee, even beleeve in Chriſt, thou ſhalt finde mercie. Thy ſinne cannot be ſo great, but his ſufferings, merit and mercie are infinitely greater; it were horrible impietie and blaſphemie to thinke otherwiſe. And thus much for the hainouſneſſe of thy ſinne.

Verſ.15.

Mar.9.23. 16.16. John 3.15,16. Acts 16.31. Iohn 1.29. 1 Iohn 2.1.

Secondly, whereas Satan will ſeeke to terrifie and to affright thy conſcience in this manner: But now the time is too late; thou haſt deſpiſed the day of mercie and the Lords gracious call ſo long, now he will none of thy ſervice, ſeeing it is inforced and for feare only, and not of any love to him. Receive thou this anſwer againe from his goodneſſe; That it is never too late, ſo long as the Lord cals thee by his word here, and knocks at the doore of thy heart, if thou canſt but heare him and open unto him, reſolving to doe forthwith in all things as he commands thee, he will yet come in unto thee, and ſup with thee, and thou with him. He will fill thy heart with all joy paſſing all the bankets in the world. He would never bid thee repent, and offer thee mercie upon condition of thy repentance, if he would not performe it unto thee repenting and doing as he bids thee. It is therefore *yet the day of ſalvation, it is yet the accepted time.* Remember *Manaſſes*, againſt this temptation alſo. The Lord had ſpoken unto him and to his people, (ſaith the Holy Ghoſt) but they would not

2.
The ſecond terrour of Satan, that the time of mercy is paſt.
The time is never too late, whilſt the Lord cals us to repent, if we can obey.
Apoc.3.20.

2 Cor.6.2.
The ſame examples of *Manaſſes* and *Paul* moſt comfortable hereto alſo.

2 Chr. 33.10. Verſ. 11,12,13. not regard. And yet after that, ſo ſoone as he could but once unfainedly ſeeke unto the Lord, in the true acknowledgement of his vileneſſe, though it was in his extreme affliction, yet was the Lord intreated of him. Thinke of *Paul*, how he had beene ſpoken unto by the Lord, and that in a farre other manner than ever waſt thou: for beſides all other meanes and times, God ſpake unto him by that powerfull Martyr *Stephen*, whoſe wiſdome and ſpirit, neither he nor all the adverſaries were able to reſiſt, yet he deſpiſed and perſecuted that voice to the death. The Lord alſo gave unto that his faithfull ſervant *Stephen* this glorious teſtimonie to leave *Paul* and all the reſt more without excuſe, that all who ſate in the Councell ſaw his face to ſhine, as if it had beene the face of an Angell, yet they repented not. Notwithſtanding all this, and that *Paul* was a principall man in the ſhedding of *Stephens* bloud; and alſo went on ſtill after this, breathing out threatnings and ſlaughters againſt the tender Lambes of Chriſt, yet when he was at the very worſt, and utterly paſt all hope either of returning or of ever finding mercie; even then behold, the Lord ſhewes him all this favour, ſo ſoone as ever he gave him a heart to turne and to ſeeke mercie, though in his extreme terrour, yet he was then received to mercie. The Lord never gave any man grace to repent and to reſolve unfainedly to renew his Covenant with him, and to doe all that he commands, but ever he ſhewed mercie to that man: he became to be to that man his good God and tender father, and made him his deare childe.

Acts 6.10. Acts 6.15. Acts 7.5.8. Acts 22.20.

Generall comfort, never repentant ſinner but found mercie.

He therefore yet cals and ſtretcheth out his hands to ſcorners and to all ſinners, though they be polluted with all theſe abominations, thus crying: *Hoe, every one that is a thirſt come to the fountaine and drinke*; Every one that is polluted, come to the fountaine of my bloud and waſh, and be cleane from all your ſinnes. *Behold me, behold me, your Lord* and Saviour crucified for you. Behold me the true brazen ſerpent, lifted up for the recoverie of you, from the fierie ſtings of that old ſerpent, if you can but ſee me, though the eye of your ſoule be never ſo dim, you ſhall be ſaved. Behold me your Lord and your Saviour holding open the armes of my mercie moſt deſirous to receive you.

The Lord ſtill ſtretcheth out his hands to all, to come to him. Prov. 1.22.23.8. Eſay 55.1. Behold your Lord and Saviour thus ſpreading out his armes. Iohn. 7.37. Zach. 13.1. Eſay.

you. Behold mee that true Lambe of God, who take away the ſinnes of the world, and who will take away your ſinnes alſo, that never one of them ſhall be remembred againſt you, if you can but behold me. I will renew the Covenant which is in my bloud with you. Come ye that are loaden and preſſed downe to hell with the intolerable weight of your ſinnes, and I will eaſe you; if you will but take on you the yoke of my obedience to my fathers commandements, and follow mee, you ſhall finde reſt unto your ſoules. Behold I yet ſtand at the doore of every one of your conſciences. I knocke by this mine owne voyce: whoſoever therefore of you ſhall now at length heare my voyce, and open unto mee to receive me into your heart, that I may rule there, as your Lord and Maſter, and ſhall now doe as I command, I will come unto him and ſup with him, and he with me. I will fill his ſoule with all heavenly joy, in aſſurance of the pardon of his ſinne, and my favour and mercy, and he ſhall be ever in my preſence, where is fulneſſe of joy for evermore. Doe thou therefore at length but as hee commandeth. Repent thee unfainedly of all thy ſinne, and beleeve in Ieſus Chriſt, offering thy ſelfe cheerefully unto him, to doe him thy beſt ſervice all the dayes of thy life, and thou ſhalt undoubtedly obtaine this boldneſſe to appeare before thy God, neither ſhall it be ever taken from thee.

Ioh. 3. 15, 16. *Ioh.* 6. 37. 40.

Matt. 11. 28, 29.

Rev. 3.

The terrible voice of the Lord to all deſpiſers of mercy now offered. *Weigh this well all you who would ever finde mercy.*

But for all deſpiſers and ſcorners, thus terribly doth the Lord ſpeake unto them: Oh yee who ſtill contemne mee notwithſtanding all my calling and crying unto you, with all the meanes which I have uſed to bring you to amendment. You who deſpiſe all the tokens of my love towards you, and the offer of my mercy, and though you heare all your ſinnes, and my vengeance prepared for you, will yet ſtill goe on to anger mee, to you ſhall there bee no more mercy, but only juſtice without mercy; you ſhall finde nothing but indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh, for ſo hath the Lord ſpoken; *If there bee amongſt you man or woman, any roote that ſhall bring forth Gall and Wormewood; ſo that when hee ſhall heare the words of this curſe, hee ſhall bleſſe himſelfe in his heart ſaying, I ſhall have peace*

Rom. 2. 4, 5.

Deut. 29. 18, 19.

Verſe 20.

although I walke after the ſtubbornneſſe of mine owne heart, thus adding drunkenneſſe to thirſt: The Lord will not be mercifull to him, but his wrath and jealouſie ſhall ſmoke againſt that man, and every curſe that is written in this booke ſhall light upon him, and the Lord ſhall put out his name from under heaven. The Lord will ſeparate him [he will ſingle him out to evil] *according to all the curſes of the Covenant, that are written in the booke of the law.* This ſhall be the ſtate of all who ſhall ſtill remaine rebellious againſt the word of the Lord.

The Lord will one day bring all that belong unto him, to ſay, Lord I will doe as thou commandeſt, at leaſt by ſtrong hand.

Hereby alſo it is moſt evident, that whoſoever thou art (if thou belong unto the Lord, and ſhalt be ſaved) he will make thee once ſo to heare his word, as he will enforce thee at one time or other, before thou depart hence, that thou ſhalt be glad to turne backe to his commandement and Covenant. He will make thee to acknowledge thy ſelfe ten thouſand times happie, that ever he vouchſafes thee that mercy to be of the number of thoſe, whom now thou ſcorneſt, and to become as zealous as any of them, like as *Paul* was after his converſion. Thou ſhalt be glad to ſay with *Paul*, what wilt thou Lord that I ſhall doe? Behold I am here Lord, deſirous to doe all that ever thou commandeſt me. He will cauſe thee to caſt downe thy ſelfe, to lie weeping, howling, crying and praying as *Saul*, and happie that thou maiſt finde but one drop of mercy. This will the Lord doe unto thee: Otherwiſe he will bring thee into ſome great affliction, as he did *Manaſſes* into fetters and chaines; untill thou know that he is God. He will ſmite thee with ſome horrible ſickneſſe or diſeaſe upon thy bed, as *Elihu* ſpeakes; or with ſome notable ſhame or infamie; or by ſome dreadfull overthrow, or ſome other ſenſible plague in thy wife, children, goods, or friends, or ſome horrour of conſcience, untill thou canſt ſay, I have ſinned; I have deſerved the damnation of hell; I will doe what thou bidſt; I will endure whatſoever thou wilt. *What wilt thou Lord that I ſhall doe?* This ſhall ſurely come to paſſe, if the Lord purpoſe to ſave thee from hell, and to ſhew thee any mercy, ſo that ever thou ſhalt ſee his face with joy. Thou wilt then wiſh and beſeech him to rebuke thee, ſo it be in judgement and not in his furie, rather than that he ſhould let thee lie in ſin to be condemned with the world. Otherwiſe if the Lord ſuffer thee

As *Paul*.

Acts 9.4,5,9.

Apoc. 2.22.
2 *Chro.* 33.11,12.
This he doth oft by ſome great affliction.
Iob 33.15,16.

Iob 33.26,27,to 30.

The elect will one day wiſh that God will correct them, rather than to let them to run on in ſinne.

thee to goe on perpetually in thy evill courſes, he purpoſeth undoubtedly to deſtroy thee, yea to torment thee in hell eternally; and becauſe he will doe this, therefore heareſt thou not his voice. No warning will doe thee any good. Thou art in the very caſe of old *Elies* ſonnes and of *Amaziah*, of whom the Prophet ſaid, *I know that God hath determined to deſtroy thee, becauſe thou haſt done this and haſt not obeyed my counſell.*

God purpoſeth their deſtruction whom he ſuffereth to goe on perpetually in impenitency *2 Chro. 25. 16.*

But to leave particular perſons, to come to all in generall, and to us of this our nation in a more ſpeciall manner, yet once againe; to trie what ſecuritie and confidence we may have from the Lord, that we ſhall ſtill remaine before him, and eſcape the judgements from Babylon ſo long threatned unto us, and all other. What is it which concerneth our aſſurance to be ſtill preſerved, and which now the Lord doth demand of us? Is not this it? Doth he not ſeeme thus to ſpeake unto us all? Oh my people haſt thou yet done as I have commanded thee? Let me yet once more put thee in remembrance of the ſpeciall admonitions, which I have given thee, wherein I have moſt apparantly called upon thee from heaven, and bidden thee to repent. Beſides all my long patience of former daies. Bethinke thy ſelfe ſeriouſly of the ſpace that I have vouchſafed thee, ſince I threatned thee in moſt viſible manner to cut thee downe, by the axe of the proud enemie, to ſee if yet thou wouldeſt bring forth the fruits of my Goſpell. Not three yeeres alone, but tenne times three yeeres. Yea let me put thee in minde of all thoſe my three ſo faire warnings given unto thee, that thou wouldeſt yet bethinke thy ſelfe of them, and of the ſpace which I have granted thee betweene every one of them, to trie if yet at length thou wouldeſt be wiſe and turne unto me. Bethinke thy ſelfe well how I have come unto thee yeere by yeere in all this time, ſtill looking for the fruits of thy repentance. Lay it alſo unto thine heart, that in every one of theſe my moſt dreadfull, and yet my moſt fatherly admonitions, thou haſt beene as a brand miraculouſly plucked forth of the burning; but above all other, in the third and laſt ſo ſenſibly and viſibly, that all the world muſt needes acknowledge my endleſſe mercie and compaſſion towards thee. And finally, call to

Application to us all in generall what ſecuritie we have to eſcape the vengeance ſo long threatned from Babylon.

The Lord demands of all in generall, whether we have yet done as he hath ſo oft commanded us, by repenting of our ſins.

Calleth us to bethinke our ſelves of the time and ſpace given us to repent.

Our ſeverall admonitions, and the time betwixt. *Apoc. 2. 21. Luk. 13. 7, 8.*

How he hath come yeere by yeere looking for our repentance.

Of our dangers and deliverances in each.

Our purposes, promises and shewes of amendment.

to minde whether thy heart smit thee not then for thy impenitencie: yea, whether thou hast not in all these made some promises and shewes of repentance and amendment; whether thou hast not either begunne to take away some of thy chiefe and crying sinnes, or talked thereof, and what thou wouldest doe, and how thou wouldest walke more carefully in my Covenant. Now therefore answer me, whether thou hast yet done as in all these thou hast seene and heard mee so sensibly commanding thee, by the voice of all these my fatherly warnings, and great deliverances, and chiefly calling on thee by the voice of all my servants, which at these times of thy dangers have ever cryed loudest vnto thee thus; Repent, repent O my people. Hast thou not done cleane otherwise? Yea hast thou not done ten times worse than ever thou didst before, setting thy selfe proudly to practise all thy former abominations with a higher hand, as if thy former rebellions were nothing, and as if thou shouldest now say desperately, I will not heare, neither will I returne any more? I will walke henceforth after the stubbornnesse of mine owne heart. If it be so, what canst thou say for thy selfe, why I should not proceed in judgement against thee? How canst thou thinke that I should yet forbeare thee any longer, when as I have gone beyond all degrees of commiseration with thee?

Whether we have done as then he bade us and we promised.

Or not many times worse than before.

Saying now desperatly we will not return.

The Lords replie vnto vs, if we answer that we have repented.

And that wee shal have peace. *Deut.* 29.19.

That he wil not be mercifull to such a nation. *Apoc.* 3.3.

He will deale with whole nations like as with particular men comming to this height of sinne.

If thou shouldest answer and say, as the particular sinners before, Nay but I have repented: May not then the Lord reply upon thee likewise, asking thee in this manner? How is it then that the cry of every one of thy wonted sinnes ascendeth yet seven times more, and is now in my eares continually? And therefore seeing that thy case is thus, that thou canst no longer cloake nor excuse thy sinne, and yet beginnest so to say generally, I shall have peace although I walke after the stubbornnesse of mine owne heart, thus adding drunkennesse to thirst, must I not now needes come vpon thee of a sudden, and that so as thou shalt not know at what houre? For thus the Lord speakes to his owne people, when they come to this height of sinne. Like as he speakes to a particular man, even so he speakes to whole nations of his people, when they come in a generall manner so to sin against him. The place was mentioned before,

Deut.

Deut. 29. 22, 23, 24, 25. *That he will not be mercifull unto them, his wrath ſhall ſmoake againſt them, he will put their name from under Heaven; he will ſeparate them to evill, according to all the curſes of the Covenant written in his Booke of the Law. For ſo hee ſaith of all that Nation. That he will make them as Sodome, which he overthrew in his anger. That other Nations ſhall ſay, wherfore hath the Lord done thus to this Nation, how fierce is his wrath? And that the very Heathen ſhall be able to ſay, That it is becauſe they have forſaken the Covenant which the Lord made with them.* Thus it came to paſſe in this Captivity; wherein notwithſtanding that they generally ſtill continued in a profeſſion of Gods Covenant, and retained the outward forme of Gods worſhip, as though they had beene all Gods owne people, yet many of them were turned from it, to the Idols of other countries, others to the Idols of their owne hearts, and every one almoſt after his owne way, more than for a faſhion and an outward ſhew. Therefore the Lord brought all this plague upon them, to cauſe not only Ieruſalem to be thus taken, but alſo to be made an aſtoniſhment and a hiſſing: although (as they ſaid) *the kings of the earth and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have beleeued, that ever the enemy ſhould have entred within the gates of Ieruſalem*; as they bewailed it in the Lamentations. And although they themſelves ſaid and perſwaded themſelves that the Caldeans ſhould ſurely depart from them, even then when they did beſiege them; yet the Lord tels them plainly, that the Caldean ſhould not depart from them; *yea that though they had ſmitten the whole hoaſt of the Caldeans, ſo that there ſhould remaine but wounded men amongſt them, yet ſhould every man of them riſe up in his tent, and burne that City with fire*: and why? *Even for their abominations and ſinnes, and becauſe no warning would ſerve. Becauſe they would not obey the words of the Lord, which he commanded by his Meſſengers.*

The Lord thus cals aloud unto us from heaven, to apply theſe forewarnings unto our ſelves yet at length, and to lay them neerer unto our hearts; with all other, where hee ſo threatneth to plague ſuch a people yet ſeven times more: and ſelves, and to trie what ſafetie wee can promiſe to our ſelves, untill wee

Deut. 29. 20, 21.
Verſ. 22.
Verſ. 23.
Verſ. 24.
Verſ. 25.
Verſ. 26.
That the heathen may be able to take notice of it, & to acknowledge God righteous for their ſo tranſgreſſing his Covenant.
Jer. 22. 8.
Thus he executed his wrath upon Ieruſalem, bringing this overthrow upon them, which the kings of the earth would never have thought.
Lam. 4. 20.

Ier. 37. 9, 10.
And which themſelves at their very ſiege could not be perſwaded of.
Lam. 4. 13.
And all becauſe they would not yeeld to doe as he cõmanded.
Ier. 37. 2.
The Lord cals us to applie theſe to our have repented.

Levit. 26. 21. 24. 28.

that

that he muſt needs be true and juſt in his ſayings, when all men ſhall be found liers, as he was here in his proceeding with Iudah. And therefore it highly concerneth us, to conſider well what ſafety we can promiſe to our ſelves, from that Romiſh Babylon, (which hath ſo oftentimes of late yeeres, ſo neerely dealt with us as Babylon with Iudah, and ſo gapes for our deſolation, above all other the Churches of the earth) untill ſuch time as we have taken away the abominations for which the Lord doth and hath ſo long threatned us by her. It ſtandeth us in hand wiſely to fore-thinke, whether they will or can poſſibly leave off their attempts though they ſhould ſeeme all now to be reconciled or diſabled, for ever riſing againſt us any more, untill the anger of the Lord be pacified. Surely as God threatned them by that Babylon then, ſo he doth us now by Rome that ſpirituall Babylon: this cannot be denied. And as he told them, that though there remained none of their enemies but wounded men, yet they ſhould ſo invade and deſtroy Ieruſalem unleſſe they would turne, ſo are we to feare the Lords wrath from theſe our unplacable enemies, untill we have turned unto him. And this the more certainly, becauſe as they have been the principall ſcourges of the Church, ſince it got out of Babylon, and now ſo lately in our neighbour Churches, ſo they muſt be, as is foretold. And for us it is moſt righteous becauſe Babylon hath been the cauſe of moſt of our abominations, we have ſo much doated after her, (as hath beene ſhewed) and doe ſtill, we have alſo ſo fully and ſo often ſeene her bloudy rage, and yet nothing can warne us.

Chiefly from Rome.

From whence God threatneth us as ſenſibly as he did them from Caldea. *Jer.* 37.2. 9.10.

Reaſons.

For the concluſion and ſhutting up of this point, let us aske of all the Booke of God, of all former ages and places where the Church of God hath beene: Let us inquire of all the godly learned, and even of our owne hearts (if we have not utterly loſt all light and ſenſe) whether we can ever imagine to enjoy any ſecuritie, but that we ſhall be one day left into the enemies hand, untill we ſhall yeeld unto the Lord to doe as he commandeth us: according as in words we will all acknowledge and profeſſe, that we ought to doe. I meane untill we have ſought ſome redreſſe of the maine abominations which all our conſciences doe condemne, acknowledging that God may ſo juſtly plague us

Concluſion of all how to try the certainty hereof, and when we may have ſecuritie and boldneſſe.

us for them, and it is most like that he will in some terrible manner, unlesse our land be some way purged of them. Then only shall we have an assurance from the Lord to be delivered from our dangers by Babylon, and enjoy his gracious favours and protection. Then so many of all sorts and degrees, as have set themselves to pacifie his heavenly Majestie, shall have boldnesse. Although even the Lord Iesus himselfe should come to execute vengeance in flaming fire, after all our fearefull warnings, or whatsoever other judgement he shall smite the earth withall.

But to leave the further meditation and working of this unto him, who yet thus mercifully cals upon us, and still waits for our turning that he may spare us. And now to returne to the meeke ones of the earth, for their comfort and securing. To all sorts (I meane) who are able to say in a good conscience, as the Angell doth here, Lord I have done as thou hast commanded, I have done in all things as thou hast bidden me, so farre as I have beene able. Howsoever the times have beene still declining, waxing worse and worse, yet I have laboured thou knowest, to keepe mine eie still fixed upon thee and thy commandements; to remaine with thee, and not to depart away with this evill world. I have striven though weakly, yet unfainedly and with the whole desire of my heart to walke as thy servants, *Enocke*, *Noah*, *Lot*, *Abraham*, and *Ieremie*. This man who can speake thus in truth, yea though he should but begin at this very houre, and now repenting unfainedly and beleeving in Christ Iesus, shall henceforth so doe as the Lord commands, he shall finde confident boldnesse to returne and to appeare before the Lord, both at death and at the judgement, come whensoever they will. This man alone hath a certaine warrant of the Lords favour, his promises and protection, that he may looke up to him with joy, and flie unto him, whatsoever desolation he shall send upon the world. All the promises thorow the Booke of God, both for providence, protection, direction and comfort, belong specially to this man. Those heavenly consolations intermixed in the Prophets, belong peculiarly to this man, that he shall certainly save his owne soule. And especially those in that Euangelicall and heavenly Prophet *Esay*; That the Lord will

Comfort to all the meeke who can say that they have truly endevoured to doe as he hath commanded.

Heb.3.7.
Acts 16.31.

These alone can have boldnesse having the promises.

Ezek.14.14.

Esay 8.14.

will be to this man a Sanctuary, a hiding place, a place of refuge, as the ſanctuary was. Alſo to the end to ſtrengthen ſuch of his faithfull ſervants againſt all terrors and feares of being left up into the enemies hand, and of the miſeries enſuing thereupon, the Lord hath given unto them moſt heavenly preſervatives and conſolations of all ſorts.

The Lord hath left moſt comfortable anſwers againſt each feare of his ſervants in ſuch caſes.

I Againſt the feare of being left into the enemies hand.

Firſt, whereas we are ready to thinke thus, what ſhall become of me and ſuch other poore wretches as I am, if the Lord ſo leave us up to the will of our enemies? although we eſcape with our lives, yet ſhall we be made a prey and a ſpoile to every wicked catiffe. Marke what the Lord anſwereth to each faithfull man and woman in this caſe: *Thou art my ſervant, I have called thee before the chiefe of the earth. I have choſen thee and not caſt thee away, feare thou not for I am with thee. Be not afraid, for I am thy God. I will ſtrengthen thee and helpe thee, and will ſuſtaine thee with the right hand of my juſtice.*

Eſa. 41. 9, 10.

The ſecond feare for the wrongs and provocations of the enemies.

Secondly, whereas in our weakneſſe we are ready to reply againe and ſay unto the Lord thus: But Lord thou knoweſt, that for thy name alone and for our care and conſcience to pleaſe thee, and to doe as thou haſt commanded, we have already felt that which thy ſervant *Ieremy* complaineth of, even amongſt our brethren and in the dayes of peace: for though wee have neither given nor taken upon uſurie, as he cleares himſelfe, nor medled in the world; yea, although we have ſought the good of all, the hurt of none; the common peace and wealth of *Iſrael*, and laboured to be innocent; yet have we had almoſt every one againſt us, every body reviling us, as the wickedeſt people of the earth, each provoking and ready to contend with us. If our brethren have done this, when we have lived in the boſome of thy Church, and under many worthy lawes and ſundry good Magiſtrates, what then may we looke for to come upon us, if ever thou ſhouldeſt leave us to be made ſlaves unto our enemies?

Jer. 15.

10.

Our enemies ſhall be aſhamed and confounded, and as a thing of nothing. *Eſay* 41. 11.

Anſ. Now hearken what our God ſaith to confirme us againſt this feare alſo. *Feare not* (ſaith the Lord) *Behold all they that provoke thee ſhall be aſhamed and confounded, they ſhall be as nothing, and they that ſtrive with thee ſhall periſh.* The Lords meaning is, that when the time is come that he hath humbled and tried

us by them, and ſuffered them to fill up the meaſure of their rage and their ſinne againſt him, then it ſhall ſo come to paſſe upon them as he threatneth : for ſo ſaith the Lord, *thou ſhalt ſeeke them and ſhalt not finde them.* And then he gives the reaſon of it : for ſaith he, *they ſhall be as nothing, and the men that warre againſt thee, ſhall be as a thing of naught : for I the Lord God will hold thy right hand, ſaying unto thee, feare not, for I will helpe thee.*

Verſ. 12.
Verſ. 13.
For God will helpe us.
Our third feare for that we are but poore wormes, and nothing in regard of our enemies which are the mighty men of the earth.

Oh, but ſay we againe, what likelihood or poſſibilitie can there be hereof ? I am but a poore worme ; and all we thy ſervants ſhall be but as ſilly lambes amongſt the bloudie wolves : for our enemies ſhall be the great and mightie men of the earth, how then can this be ? Behold how graciouſly the Lord confirmes us againſt this temptation alſo, ſaying, *Feare not thou worme Iacob (though thou be but a worme,* if thou be a *Iacob,* who wilt doe as I command thee, and wilt wraſtle with me, praying and weeping, and not let me goe before thou have the bleſſing) feare not. *And ye men of Iſrael feare not, I will helpe thee ſaith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the holy one of Iſrael ;* I have ſtrength enough. I that was able to redeeme thee from Egypt, and from the power of hell, I will helpe thee. *Therefore behold I will make thee a rouler* [thou ſhalt breake thy enemies in peeces as the rouler doth the clods] *I will make thee a new threſhing inſtrument having teeth ; thou ſhalt threſh the mountaines and bring them to powder, and make the hils as chaffe : Thou ſhalt fanne them, and the winde ſhall carry them away, and the whirlwinde ſhall ſcatter them,* [that is, thou ſhalt be the utter overthrow and deſtruction of all that ſet themſelves to hurt thee] for ſo the Lord himſelfe expoundeth it, concerning the enemies of his ſervants, ſaying, *Whoſoever ſhall gather himſelfe againſt thee ſhall fall. All the weapons that are made againſt thee ſhall not proſper. Every tongue that ſhall riſe againſt thee in judgement ſhalt thou condemne :* for ſaith he, *Behold, I have created the Smith that bloweth the coales in the fire, and that bringeth forth an inſtrument for his worke, and I have created the deſtroier to deſtroy :* meaning that he himſelfe creates and brings all the enemies of his Church, to humble her,

Verſ. 14.
The Lords anſwer, that we ſhould not feare if we be Iacobs and Iſraels.
Verſ. 15.
He who redeemed us will ſave us.
And will make us to the enemies as roulers to the clods.
Verſ. 16.
As threſhing inſtruments.
Fannes.
Eſay 54.15.
All the enemies ſhall be overthrowne.
Verſ. 17.
No weapons of theirs ſhall proſper againſt us to hurt us.
Becauſe he doth and ordereth all for his owne glory and the greateſt good of his owne in the end.

her, and to cauſe her to ſeeke and turne unto him in all true ſubmiſſion: but afterwards he throweth thoſe rods into the fire. He himſelfe doth all this. And therefore he ſaith in that former place, *And thou ſhalt rejoyce in the Lord, and glory in the holy one of Iſrael,* [that is, when thou being ſo weake ſhalt ſee the overthrow of thy mightie enemies, thou ſhalt rejoyce and glory in the Lord thy God, acknowledging that he alone hath thus confounded them, that his owne hand hath wrought all this. Thus hath it ever come to paſſe in his Church, after the time that he hath humbled his by their wicked enemies; then he hath given the enemie for their ranſome, as he gave Egypt for Iſrael, ſo likewiſe Babylon and all other, and made them to drink the dregs of his wrath. *He makes his Church to be as a cup of poyſon to every enemie,* that he that hurts any of his ſervants, had as good to drinke a cup of poyſon, it ſhall be his bane. Yea he cauſeth his Church and people to be as a heavie ſtone, that ſhall cruſh in peeces every enemie which lifteth at them, though all the people of the earth ſhould gather themſelves againſt them. And thus the Lord anſwereth this feare of his ſervants for their owne weakneſſe, and the power of the enemie.

Eſay 41.16. That in the end we ſhall rejoyce in him.

This hath been ever the Lords uſuall manner, and to give the enemies for their ranſome. *Eſay* 43.3. *Zach.* 12.2. He makes his a cup of poyſon to the enemies. *Zach.* 12.3. A heavie ſtone to cruſh all the enemies who liſt at them.

Now whereas the poore ſervants of the Lord may ſay againe unto him; we know that thus it ſhall come to paſſe for us againſt all our enemies in the end, and withall thoſe which hurt us, that indeed they are but his rods, and that at length he will burne them, yet in the meane time, we may fall into extreme dangers and miſeries by their crueltie, if for our ſinnes they ſo prevaile; ſo that we may come into thoſe diſtreſſes which the Church complaines of, *that ſhe had gone through fire and water,* and therefore we have juſt cauſe to tremble for feare hereof. See how cheerfully the Lord ſpeaks unto us, confirming us alſo againſt this temptation: *Feare not, I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine. When thou paſſeſt through the water I will be with thee: And through the flouds that they doe not overflow thee. When thou walkeſt through the very fire, thou ſhalt not be burnt, neither ſhall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the holy one of Iſrael thy Saviour.* Thus tenderly ſpeakes the Lord.

The fourth feare of Gods people for the miſeries we may come into in the meane time, amongſt our enemies. *Pſal.* 66.12. The Lords anſwer thereto. That he will be with us in the midſt of all. *Eſay* 43.1. *Verſ.* 2. *Verſ.* 3. Becauſe he is our God.

And whereas we may yet be further terrified in thinking

that

that then we may come into extreme calamitie and be in a desperate state for want of the necessary comforts of this life; as the Church complaines that hungry and thirstie their soules fainted in them; and as when the tongues of the young infants cleaved to the roofes of their mouthes for thirst, in the captivitie: Marke how tenderly the Lord answereth this grievous temptation also, to strengthen all his poore children; *When the poore and needie* (saith he) *seeke water and there is none, their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will heare them,* [as if he should have said, I that heard *Hagar*, will heare them much more] I the God of Israel will not forsake them. *I will open rivers in the tops of the hils, and fountaines in the midst of the vallies.* And so he promiseth there, *that he will set in the wildernesse all kinde of pleasant trees.* The meaning of the Lord is that he will at that day be as carefull and extraordinary in providing releefe for his, as ever he was for his poore people, when they travelled through the wildernesse; When he caused the heavens to raine downe Mannah, and the rocke to poure out water unto them. The ordinary meanes failing, he will give extraordinary; either inclining the hearts of them who lead them captives to favour them, as the Babylonians did *Ieremie*, or dealing otherwise strangely above all that ever we can conceive. Thus he did in the daies of Qu. *Mary*, to the poore persecuted Saints of this our nation, in France, Germany and other countries, where they came. And thus he doth at this day to all that unfainedly feare his name. Howsoever they seeme destitute and forsaken of the world, *Yet when they cry unto the Lord in their troubles he evermore delivereth them from their distresse*; and heareth them in all things wherein they call upon him, as he seeth it best. Aske of any such a one unfainedly fearing the Lord, and who hath beene tried the most by any like afflictions or temptations, whether he cannot upon his owne experience justifie the truth hereof, as Gods people have done in former ages; and so all of us may, unlesse by our owne unbeleefe, or other our hainous sins we have provoked the Lord and hindred the course of his mercie.

But notwithstanding all this, yet may the poore soule reply further in this maner: Though all this be the truth of God, and

The fift answer of the Lord against the feare of want of necessary comforts. *Psal* 107.5. *Esay* 41.17.

That he will heare and not forsake them. *Vers.* 18.

He will prepare rivers of comfort and all pleasant trees whersoever they come.

He will be as carefull for them as for his people in the wildernesse.

Giving extraordinary meanes when the ordinary faile.

Inclining the hearts of strangers and enemies.

Ever hearing them in that which is best. *Psal.* 107.6. 13.19.

Our owne experience. *Psa.* 107.8.15.

A 6. comfort against feare of fainting in the long continuance of the troubles of the Church.

and although I ſilly wretch am by the mercy of my God able to verifie every word; that I have ſeene it all fulfilled in my ſelfe in ſome meaſure, according to my trials, yet this affliction may lie ſo long upon us, that it may utterly overwhelme us. To arme us alſo againſt this terrour, marke how comfortably and lovingly the Lord ſpeakes to every one of his obedient children to keepe our hearts from fainting; Feare not, thou ſhalt not be aſhamed, thou ſhalt not be confounded, I will be with thee, I will not faile thee, I will not forſake thee, I will never ſuffer thee to be tempted above that that thou ſhalt be able, [I will increaſe thy ſtrength as I ſuffer thy temptation to increaſe] and in due time I will give a moſt bleſſed iſſue. Howſoever for a little while I may ſeeme to have forſaken thee, yet with great compaſſion will I gather thee. And *though for a moment in my anger I hide my face from thee, yet with everlaſting mercie I will have compaſſion on thee, ſaith the Lord thy redeemer: for the mountaines ſhall remove, and the hils ſhall fall downe, but my mercie ſhall not depart from thee, neither ſhall the covenant of my peace fall away, ſaith the Lord that hath had compaſſion on thee.* And therefore even in the midſt of thy trials, when thou ſhalt thinke that I am the fartheſt off, thou ſhalt finde me the neereſt; when thou imagineſt thy ſelfe moſt forſaken, thou ſhalt ſee thy ſelfe moſt in remembrance, and leaſt forſaken. Then ſhalt thou ſee the Lord more viſible than ever in former time. Thou ſhalt finde him a very preſent helpe in trouble. Then is his time to ſhew himſelfe. That through happy experience thou ſhalt grow to be able to ſay as bleſſed *Paul, though I be afflicted, yet am I not in diſtreſſe; though in povertie, yet not overcome of povertie; though perſecuted, yet not forſaken; though I be caſt downe, yet I periſh not.* And finally to be able to triumph as he doth; *though ſorrowing, yet alwaies rejoycing; though having nothing, yet poſſeſſing all things.*

And for the ſhutting up of all and the filling up of all thy comforts, hearken what thy loving God will ſay even in the midſt of thy greateſt affliction, *Oh thou afflicted and toſſed with tempeſt that haſt no comfort, Behold I will lay thy ſtones with the Carbunkle, and thy foundation with Saphires. And I will make*

thy

Here is comfort enough, let us only apply it by the hand of faith. According to our faith it ſhall be done unto us.
Eſa. 54.4. & 43. 2.5.
Ioſ. 1.9.
Heb. 13.5.
He will never faile us.
1 *Cor.* 10.13.
Eſay 54.7.
Though for a little he ſeeme to leave us.
Verſ. 8.
Verſ. 10.
Yet the mountaines may ſooner remove than his mercie.
2 *Cor.* 4.8,9.
Pſal. 9.9.
In the greateſt diſtreſſe is his time to ſhew himſelfe moſt manifeſtly.
Pſal. 10.1.
Pſal. 50.15.
91.15.
Pſal. 107. 6.13.
2 *Cor.* 4.8.
Verſe 9.
2 *Cor.* 6.10.
That we may be able to triumph as *Paul* over all afflictions.

thy windowes of Emerands [*or Pearles*] *and thy gates ſhining ſtones, and all thy borders of pleaſant ſtones,* that is, after all thy trials ended, I will give thee ſuch joy in abundance and ſo great glory as *never eye ſaw, nor ever eare heard, nor ever entered into mans heart to conſider of: for this light affliction which is but for a moment, ſhall cauſe unto thee a farre more excellent and an eternall weight of glory.* So that in the midſt of all thy trials thou ſhalt be able with happie *Paul* to account that *all the afflictions of this preſent life* (though it were to wander up and downe forlorne in dens and caves of the earth, as the poore Saints have done) yet they *are not all worthy of that glory which then thou ſhalt enjoy,* when thou haſt in obedience thus finiſhed thy courſe, and performed all that which he hath commanded thee to doe. *For this is the heritage of all the Lords ſervants, their righteouſneſſe is of me, ſaith the Lord.*

And our principall joy in the end.
Eſay 54.11.
Behold thy comforts, thou that in all thy afflictions canſt ſtill wait on thy God.
Verſ. 12.
1 *Cor.* 2. 9.
2 *Cor.* 4. 7.
Rom. 8. 8.
So to be able to account all our ſufferings not to be worthy the leaſt part of our glorie which ſhall be revealed.
Eſay 54. 17.
The rejoycing of Gods faithfull ſervants hereupon.

Now bleſſed be the Lord, may the poore Chriſtian ſay, I acknowledge theſe to be heavenly conſolations indeed, and the voice of my moſt tender Father directed unto me, as it were calling me by name; even to me ſpecially, who have ſet my ſelfe in the uprightneſſe of my heart to runne the way of all his Commandements unto the end, ſo long as I live to doe only as hee commandeth. And therfore as hereby I know my ſelfe undoubtedly to be one of his ſervants, and this is my heritage, ſo I feele my ſelfe revived and confirmed againſt whatſoever can betide me any way. Yet notwithſtanding all this, I cannot but have my teares running downe by my cheekes, and wiſh my head a fountaine of water, to weepe continually for the poore Church and my deare Nation, for all our fearefull ſinnes which I ſee that we are ſo guiltie of, and for all theſe terrible ſignes, and denuntiations of the Lords vengeance, which muſt needs come upon us for the ſame, unleſſe they be ſpeedily prevented: for how can I or any true ſervant of the Lords be ever fully comforted, ſo long as wee but fore-ſee the evident danger of all the former evils, with all the blaſphemies and diſhonour which muſt needs be done unto the Lord, if ever he ſhall leave us into the will of the enemie for theſe our ſinnes? What might I doe therefore for my moſt beloved and tender Mother which hath bred and nouriſhed mee; and for my deare Countrey, in the

7. The Lords anſwer to the faithfull ſoule mourning for the feare of the dangers of the Church.

peace whereof I have enjoyed all my peace and proſperitie, with all other my comforts ſo long; and for ſo many thouſand ſoules as are like howſoever to periſh in their impenitencie, for want of admonition?

Anſw. The Lord tels thee what thou ſhouldeſt doe for her, doe as he commands thee yet at length, in her behalfe, if thou wouldſt not ſee her miſeries, or if thou loveſt her indeed; or at leaſt if thou deſire the ſaving of thoſe poore ſoules. Step up into the breach to ſtay all this wrath. Seeke thou the Lord amongſt the meeke of the earth, for Sions ſake hold not thy tongue, and for Ieruſalems ſake give him no reſt. Be one of his remembrancers day and night in all thy ſupplications and prayers, holding up thy hands againſt Satan and Antichriſt, and all his Churches enemies who ſeeke her ruine. Crie mightily unto him for this one thing, that yet at length we may have our eyes opened generally to ſee our danger for all our abominations. And then that our hearts may be ſo prepared, as that they may melt into teares, as the heart of holy *Ioſiah* did in the like caſe. And that every one fearing the word of the Lord, may ſeeke to meet him before his decree be executed upon us; and each to turne others from his evill way, and all to ſtoope unto the Lord. That ſo wee may beginne to doe all things firſt which hee hath commanded, whereby his anger may be appeaſed; and afterwards all thoſe things in like manner, whereby his mercy may be continued on us and on our poſteritie, and ſo we may ever remaine a glorious Church and a happie Nation to his appearing: for herein alone muſt ſtand all our aſſurance, as wee have ſeene. Let us therefore yet once againe open our eares to heare what the Lord commandeth. He that hath an eare to heare, let him hearken what the Lord in his tender compaſſion doth crie for at our hands. As he ſpake to Iſrael then, ſo doth he now to us. The word is the ſame, and we now the Iſrael of God planted in their places. *Come now, ſaith hee, let us reaſon together. Though your ſinnes were as crimſon, they ſhall be made as white as ſnow. If you will yet conſent and obey, you ſhall eat the good things of the Land. Returne, and cauſe others to returne away from all your evill waies, ſo iniquitie ſhall not be your deſtruction. Caſt away from you all your tranſgreſſions, whereby you have tranſ-*

greſſed,

Anſ. What every faithfull ſervant of God ſhould doe for the Church and this Nation, that would never ſee nor feele their miſeries.
Ezek. 22. 32.
Zeph. 2. 3.
Eſay 62. 1, 6, 7.

Prov. 1. 22, 23.
Apoc. 2. 7, 11, 17.

All therefore as yet to harken what the Lord calleth and crieth for at our hands.
Eſay 1. 18.
Ezek. 18. 30.

Verſ. 31.

greſſed, and make you a new heart and a new ſpirit, for why will you die, Oh yee houſe of Iſrael! I deſire not the death of him that dieth, cauſe therefore one another to returne and live yee. And in another place hee crieth thus: *Oh Iſrael returne unto the Lord thy God, thou haſt fallen by thine iniquitie. Take you words and turne unto the Lord, and ſay unto him; Take away all our iniquities and receive us gratiouſly, ſo will we render the calves of our lips. Therefore turne unto thy God: keepe mercie and judgement, and hope ſtill in thy God.*

Verſ. 32.

Hoſea 14. 2.

Hoſea 12. 6.

And to ſhut up all, marke how the Lord cries unto us all, after a ſort bemoaning us for the hardneſſe of our hearts hitherto, wiſhing that ſo yet in the end it may come unto us. *Oh that my people had harkened unto me, and Iſrael had walked in my waies, I would ſoone have humbled their enemies, and turned my hand againſt their adverſaries, the haters of the Lord ſhould have beene ſubject unto him, but their time ſhould have endured for ever. And I would have fed them with the fat of wheat,* [or with moſt excellent wheat in abundance] *and with hony out of the rocke would I have ſatisfied thee.*

How the Lord calleth, moaning our eſtate.
Pſal. 81. 13.
Verſ. 14.
Verſe 15.
Verſ. 16.
What he will doe for us and againſt our enemies, if we will harken unto him.
Prov. 1. 21, 22.
8. 12.
3. 4.

Thus hath he cried long, and witneſſed by many ſignes that he would doe it. Thus he yet crieth and ſtretcheth out his hands in all tender pitie unto us ſtill. This hee will accompliſh if wee will obey him, his mouth hath ſpoken it, if wee will beleeve him. Which that we may all doe at length for the ſafe preſerving and perpetuall welfare of us and ours, even of this Nation and his whole Church, and for the good of every particular ſoule, he grant unto us in the infinite riches of his mercie, and for his tender love and promiſes in his bleſſed Sonne. And let all who deſire to enjoy this heavenly ſecuritie by doing his commandements, crie, Amen. Even ſo Lord Ieſus let him pray unto his heavenly Majeſtie in the manner following, that this worke may be ſanctified to us for obtaining thereof.

Thus have I through his gratious aſſiſtance and mercie, endevoured according to my weake abilitie to doe in all this even as he hath commanded; and ſhall ſo I hope perſever unto the end, waiting for the certaine accompliſhment of all his promiſes and his glorious appearing. All the working hereof I commend unto his bleſſing who hath given it unto his meaneſt

meaneſt and unworthieſt ſervant: in whoſe hands are all the hearts of the ſonnes of men, to mollifie and give repentance, when and to whom it ſeemeth good to his heavenly Majeſtie; and who alſo worketh wonderfully above all that we can conceive, and oft times by the weakeſt inſtruments, that himſelfe may have all the glory. To him alone be all praiſe, glory, power and dominion in his Church, throughout all ſucceeding generations.

Amen, Amen.

FINIS.

A HOLY PRAYER, ACCORDING TO THE principall parts of this booke, that we may have a ſanctified uſe of this and all other forewarnings, thereby to pacifie the Lords wrath, prevent his judgements, and to obtaine the continuance and increaſe of all our bleſſings, for the perpetuall good of us all, and of our poſteritie.

Whereof we may uſe the whole or any part, as we ſhall thinke meet.

OH moſt bleſſed LORD GOD, who though thou art moſt holy and moſt juſt, and thereby terrible in wrath and vengeance againſt all obſtinate wicked men, yet art through thy Chriſt, infinite in mercie, and endleſſe in compaſſion to all poore ſinners, that can in unfained repentance truly turne unto thee; we pray thee for the Lord Ieſus Chriſts ſake, to ſanctifie this warning and all other like holy meanes unto us, for the working of a lively humiliation amongſt us thy people, to cauſe us to meet thee with an intreatie of peace, and to turne us aright unto thee from all our evill waies. Lord thou haſt cried as loud in our eares, by thy word in the mouthes of all thy faithfull meſ-

ſengers, for this full threeſcore yeere, and by all our dangers wherein we have beene, with all kinde of threatnings, as ever thou didſt to Hieruſalem; that our viſitations have drawne neere. Thou haſt in all this time ſhewed us our viſiters from Babylon, by whom thou haſt menaced to viſit us; not in a viſion darkly, as thou didſt to *Ezekiel*, but as it were viſibly, that wee have all manifeſtly ſeene and acknowledged it, and every of them with his weapon in his hand to deſtroy us: yet thou haſt in the riches of thy mercie ſo farre forth reſtrained their fury, and ſtayed their cruell weapons, (which they ever have in all this time, and doe at this preſent hold up againſt us in moſt deadly malice, thirſting after our bloud) that they have not beene able hitherto to execute thy denunciations againſt us.

Good Lord ſtrike into our hearts a terrour hereby, that thou didſt never ſo long warne any of thy people, but at length thou viſitedſt indeed, as here thou didſt Iudah, in a moſt dreadfull manner, when thy patience had beene ſo long abuſed, and no other meanes could ſerve.

Gracious Father, make us wiſely to bethinke our ſelves in time, though thou have ſhewed thy ſelfe as loth to depart from us, as ever from Iudah, yet what and how many removes thou haſt made in withdrawing the ſundrie tokens of thy glorious preſence; as in taking away from ſo many places of this Land, the power and Majeſtie which thy holy word hath had; and withall that reverent and high eſteeme which the people have had of thy ſacred word and meſſengers; yea that holy Vnitie, when thy people were of one heart and one ſoule, honouring them moſt, in whom thy Image moſt lively appeared. Make us to remember how many times, and

how

how ſenſibly all thy glorie hath not only beene at the very threſhold of thy Temple, as bidding us farewell, but even flying away or mounting up from us, as it did from Iudah before her deſtruction. And above all, when the enemie made ſuch ſure account to have carried it away with all our happineſſe. And yet thou defeating them therein, and having cauſed their eyes to faile ever ſince with expectation when it would have gone, let that time never goe out of our hearts, when there was no other helpe in all the world, but thou alone ſtanding betweene the match and the gunpowder, whereby thou miraculouſly preventedſt that infernall ſtratagem, that they had not utterly blowne up all our glorie at once, not only thy heavenly Goſpell, but our King with all his Royall Progenie, our Nobles and Rulers, peace and proſperitie; to have made us a deſolation for ever, and a hiſſing to all Nations.

Oh tender Father make us to underſtand, that no priviledges, no not thy glorious Goſpell, though plentifully preached, can protect a people when they contemne it and increaſe in their iniquitie, but thou wilt at length as certainly remove thy candleſticke, as thou haſt done from all other places. That thou wilt not ſpare Ieruſalem, though Ieruſalem be as the Signet on thy right hand, and though it have moe promiſes of protection than ever had any other place of the earth, yet even ſhee becomming rebellious, and not hearkening to thy voice, to turne unto thee from her wicked waies, thou wilt ſurely viſit her according to all her wickedneſſe, as here thou didſt.

Therefore (good Lord) ſeeing thou haſt ſo long thus warned us, and ſtandeſt thus daily knocking at the doores of our hearts, and only ſtayeſt the execution

of thy vengeance upon an impenitent people, untill in thy tender compaſſion for thy Chriſt, thou haſt ſet a marke on thine owne faithfull ſervants, and made them ſure, to the end that they may be preſerved in the greateſt deſtructions, in what ſort thou ſeeſt beſt for them; and haſt moreover ſo plainly ſhewed us, how we may know them; That this is their propertie and condition, that they mourne and crie for all the abominations: oh make us to tremble for the ſmall number of them, of whom we have juſt cauſe to hope, that they are ſuch, in this generall jollitie of ours and deepe ſecuritie. Give hearts (oh gracious Father) to every of us, that would approve our ſelves thy children and ſervants indeed, and finde thee to be unto us as a Sanctuarie in that day, or at the day of our appearing before thee, that we may finde this propertie in our owne ſelves, ſo to mourne and vex our ſoules with righteous *Lot* from day to day, crying loud in thine eares for pardon, and for a generall repentance, that thou mayeſt ſpare us, or that at leaſt wee may be hid in the evill day, and be made ſure before.

And yet to worke more powerfully on us, in preparing theſe our unprepared hearts, unto a ſound and happie humiliation; make us all to know, that beſides all thy other armies of plagues and judgements, all the enemies of thy Church, wherewith thou haſt or doeſt yet threaten us, are nothing elſe but thy ſouldiers, and that thou alone who art the Lord of Hoaſts, haſt from time to time muſtered and ſtirred them up againſt us, continually threatning our utter deſtruction by them (unleſſe we will take away all our abominations, whereby thou art ſo provoked) like as we have formerly ſo oft beene almoſt utterly ſwallowed by them. Neither can we hope otherwiſe that ever thou ſhouldeſt turne them from us more than from Ieruſalem,

ſalem, till thou haſt executed what thou haſt ſo oft denounced againſt us, and ſo neerely executed, and that they be glutted with our bloud.

Yea Lord, cauſe us throughly to lay it unto heart, how theſe thy ſouldiers are increaſed as in number amongſt us, ſo in pride and malice; And like as they are ſo eagerly ſet againſt all other the Churches of Chriſt, as readie to devoure all at once, ſo againſt us above all, as by whom thou haſt given them greater foiles than by any other; and for that thou haſt made this our Nation as a Sanctuarie, and a continuall ſuccour ſo farre forth to all thy poore diſtreſſed flocke againſt that bloudie rage and mercileſſe tyrannie of Babylon, which hath ſo long kept ſo many of thy people in ſuch a miſerable ſlavery and captivitie, and ſeeketh ſo manifeſtly at this day by all her agents, to bring all thy poore Churches under her curſed yoake againe, and therefore this above all the reſt.

Oh loving Father, perſwade us of that dreadfull charge, that thou haſt given unto thy ſouldiers, to follow the marking Angell at the heeles, and to ſmite, to deſtroy all utterly, ſo ſoone as thine, even thoſe that mourne and crie, are marked and made ſure; for that we know not whether they be all alreadie marked, and the number of them full.

Lord inable us to conſider aright, and ever to remember why the vengeance was ſo ſevere againſt all ſorts in Ieruſalem, and ſo peremptorie without any pitie, for that the abominations were ſo generally over-ſpread, that no meanes would prevaile, and for that their ſinnes were now full, and grant us in thoſe Prophets by whom thou then forewarnedſt Iudah, to reade our owne eſtate at this day, eſpecially conſidering our light and meanes now far more glorious and powerfull, to the end we may be at length

throughly

throughly humbled before thy Majeſtie. Make us rightly to thinke why the vengeance muſt beginne at the Sanctuarie, even becauſe from thence wickedneſſe had firſt proceeded, and ſo flowne into all the Land: For that by the covetouſneſſe, blindneſſe and ſenſleſneſſe of ſo many of them, that by their greedineſſe could ſee no ſinnes, nor judgement towards themſelves, or the people, they had made the people blinde alſo; and for that by their flatteries, crying peace, when there was no peace, they had generally hardned them to deſtruction, and had daubed up their conſciences with untempered morter, untill the ſtorme of Gods vengeance came upon them all: yea, for that in ſtead of diſcovering their iniquities plainly out of the word of the Lord, to turne away their captivitie, they ſought out vaine and fooliſh things to pleaſe them with, and cauſes of baniſhment, and rejecting thy bleſſed word and counſels, they taught them the vanities of their owne hearts. And finally, for that in ſtead of compaſſion towards their people to ſave them from the vengeance, they were as the Oſtriches, and more unnaturall than the Dragons, that drew not out their breaſts unto their yong; and for that contrarily, they were very cruel againſt all the faithfull Prophets that ſtood in thy counſels to ſhew thy people their ſinnes; and againſt all the good people of the Lord that hungred after thy word, and fearing the tokens of thy wrath, ſought to ſave themſelves and theirs from the vengeance to come; becauſe theſe only were a condemnation unto them by their lives, and ſhewed a diſlike of their evill waies. Lord make us wiſely to conceive of the ſinne of the people likewiſe generally; Firſt, in approving the wickedeſt Prieſts in all theſe kindes, and the falſe Prophets, and the juſt vengeance of God in fitting them with Preachers according to their harts, ſuch as were

Preachers

Preachers alone for them, to fit them for the ſlaughter.

And ſecondly, concerning the true and faithfull Prophets whom thou ſenteſt in thine infinite compaſſion, that thou mighteſt by them convert and ſave them, make us thinke of the ſenſleſneſſe of the people and impenitencie to grieve their ſoules that their preaching was uſually as the preaching of the Prophet *Eſay*, that by hearing they heard, but underſtood not, and ſeeing they ſaw, but perceived not; but all made their hearts fat, and their eares dull of hearing, leſt they ſhould heare with their eares, and ſee with their eyes, and convert, and thou ſhouldeſt have ſaved them; though they preached never ſo plainly, line upon line, and line upon line. *Eſay 6. 9.*

Yea make us call to minde, how they proceeded from evill to worſe, that they would not heare thy faithfull ſervants more than by conſtraint, but only the flatterers and ſuch as ſpake to pleaſe them, ſowing pillowes under them that they might ſleepe ſecurely. Nay Lord how they did mocke and miſuſe thy true Prophets, and all that depended on them, and their miniſterie, that the Prophet *Eſay* complaines that he and the children which thou hadſt given him were as ſignes and wonders in Iſrael by the Lord of hoaſts; and *Ieremie*, that every one mocked him, he was daily in deriſion for crying out againſt their ſinnes. *Eſay 8. 18.* *Ier. 20. 7, 8.*

How from ſcorning they came to threaten, yea to curſe and to ſlander thy faithfull meſſengers: To conſpire privily to ſmite them with their tongues, that none ſhould regard any of their words, yea to take away not only their credits generally, but to ſtrike and impriſon ſome of them, and even to take away their very lives. For which ſinnes thou oh Lord couldeſt ſpare no longer, but broughteſt upon them all thoſe miſeries, which the *2 Chr. 36. 15, 16.* *Lament. 4. 12, 13.*

Kings

Kings of the earth nor all the world would ever have thought could have come upon Ieruſalem.

Oh make us to remember our ſelves well in this our day, that thou haſt cauſed all theſe to be written, to warne us to prevent the like vengeance by unfained repentance and ſpeedy turning, if either formerly our Land hath been polluted herewith, and is not throughly purged from it, or that we are in danger to come to the like againe.

Make us ſeriouſly to bethinke our ſelves of the unfruitfulneſſe of thy Vineyard, and that it brought forth wilde grapes, when for all thy paines and coſt thou lookedſt for good grapes, chiefly through the abuſing thy Meſſengers ſent to them to receive thy fruits of them, how thou tookeſt away the wall, and let in the wilde Boore out of the foreſt to root it up. That ſuch corruptions were crept into all places and callings, that there was no whole part, their ſilver was ſo farre corrupted, as thou waſt inforced to throw them into that fire of affliction, to burne out their droſſe in the Babyloniſh furnace, and to purifie them againe to be as at the firſt. That there was ſuch a generall hypocriſie amongſt them, drawing neere unto thee with their mouth, and honouring thee with their lips, when they had removed their hearts farre from thee, and their feare towards thee was ſo farre taught by the precepts of men, that thou waſt provoked to worke a marvellous worke and wonder, even thy ſtrange worke of vengeance amongſt them, when the wiſdome of the wiſe men periſhed, and the underſtanding of the prudent was hid, that none of them was able to ſave or helpe themſelves in the day of thy wrath.

Eſay 29. 13, 14.

Oh Lord, inable us yet in time to thinke of the ſinnes of all ſorts, which ſo inforced thee to ſo ſevere a vengeance, that thou ſpareſt not the greateſt nor the moſt honourable

nourable amongſt them, but ſenteſt them amongſt the firſt that went into that captivitie: For that, whereas their great men ſhould have beene as God, even as thine owne Majeſty, to the poore people for protection and ſuccour, and in thine owne place, that every one might haue found God ſhewing mercy and executing judgement there, and thereupon thou hadſt graced them with thine owne name; many of them were rather as Sathan in the place of God; in ſtead of naturall fathers they were ſtep-fathers to thy children, and in ſtead of being living lawes to thy people, they had utterly burſt the bonds and caſt off the yoake, trampling all thy lawes under their feet. In ſtead of being true lights of all goodneſſe and piety, they gave fearefull enſamples to thy people of all impiety and iniquity, ſo to make but a ſport of all ſinne, and to fill up their meaſure.

Make us to quake and tremble, that all the chiefer ſort in ſtead of contenting themſelves with the ſober and holy faſhions, which thou hadſt commanded, and which became thy people, were ſo generally given over to take up all the evill faſhions of the wickedeſt nations, and which thou moſt abhorredſt, yea principally to doat vpon the vildeſt guizes and moſt odious manners of the Babylonians, whom thou hadſt ordained to bee thy ſcourge for them, and thy gueſts to ſatisfie themſelves in their utter deſtructions.

Make us to ſhiver in the conſideration hereof, that moſt of the great ones amongſt them, what to have theſe ſtrange faſhions, what to raiſe their honours, houſes and poſteritie, what to ſupport intolerable pride chiefly in their women, what to make them ſumptuous buildings, ſtately and large, what to maintaine all riot and exceſſe, and finally, to fill their vnſatiable couetouſneſſe, grew to moſt

Eſa. 3.

moſt cruell oppreſſion. That in ſtead of being fathers and protectors to the poore, they became as Lions, Beares and Wolves, to thy people, yea how thou compareſt them to Apothecaries and Millers, beating and grinding the poore ſo long as they could get any ſweetneſſe out of them, and that ſo many of them by getting all into their hands, and inhauncing the prices of all things, ſwallowed up the poore people under them, buying and ſelling them, as for ſhooes: For which thou (oh Lord) as thou hadſt threatned them, ſent in the Babylonians ſo to oppreſſe and ſpoile them, and make their faire houſes deſolate, yea ſent in thoſe Lions, and Beares, and Wolves, amongſt them, to rend, teare in peeces, and ſwallow them up at their pleaſures, to ſell them for ſlaves, as they had done the poore people.

Make our hearts to break conſidering our owne eſtate, to thinke of their generall apoſtaſie before this captivitie, how they declined from all that holineſſe and ſinceritie of the practiſe of thy Religion, ſo reſtored, firſt by that worthy *Hezekiah*, after by that holy *Ioſiah*, and ſo eſtabliſhed by their good lawes, and by ſo ſolemnly renewing their Covenant in the daies of *Ioſiah*, yea how they fell from all their zeale, which for a time they had witneſſed, in their utter deſtroying, and the extremeſt deteſtation of the very prints of the former Idolatrie, and whatſoever elſe might anger thee the Lord, and how in ſtead of true pietie they came to an irreligious prophaneneſſe, yea to ſcorning at all ſound profeſſion and holineſſe; from thence to pollute thy Sabbaths, that thou waſt even prophaned amongſt them. Yea how from that they did grow to increaſe their prophaneneſſe, riſing againſt thee as againſt an enemie, by oppoſing themſelves againſt all true power of Religion, wherein only thy kingdome and

dominion

dominion is; and yet higher alſo to anger thee further, to bring in againe ſecretly, by little and little, and ſo to practiſe that Idolatrie which formerly they had deſtroyed with ſuch deteſtation, yea how they fell ſo generally to a liking of it, or to thinke it was not ſo bad as formerly they had conceived.

And from thence make us wiſely to conſider, how many of them came to the higheſt ſtep of impietie, to be ſtarke Atheiſts, even ſcorning thy glorious Majeſtie, at leaſt in all their carriages and practiſes, and all their threatnings and tokens of thy warth, as the Giants before the Floud, whereupon thou waſt as it were inforced, like as at the Floud, to ſhew thy ſelfe a God, and a moſt terrible God, by bringing on them this dreadfull floud of thy wrath.

And finally make even our very bones to tremble, in conſidering our ſelves to thinke of the diviſions and contentions which grew amongſt them hereupon, when they were all divided, *Ephraim* againſt *Manaſſeh*, and *Manaſſeh* againſt *Ephraim*, and all againſt *Iudah*; all the irreligious and prophane, yea the wicked of all ſorts, and all ſeeming religious, againſt all truly and ſoundly religious; all againſt *Ieremie*, and all thy faithfull meſſengers, and others thy deare ſervants, who made conſcience to walke more ſtrictly in thy Covenant: how they came to hate theſe above all other, and to ſeeke utterly to root out them as the moſt odious people of all the world; that thus they and the children which thou hadſt given them, were made as ſignes and wonders; even thoſe of them that daily mourned and prayed for them, and had beene the onely men to ſtand in the gap, and meanes to keepe out the vengeance ſo long from them.

Cauſe us in their enſample to ſhiver, in regard of the

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long and many meanes, which thou hadſt uſed to reclaime them, by the miniſterie of thy faithfull ſervants, mercies, chaſtiſements, wonderfull deliverances, long patience and ſtriving by thy ſpirit, and how their ſinnes were increaſed thereby; when through their owne wickedneſſe, all the meanes became unto them cauſes of their further induration, and even to prepare them for this terrible deſtruction: yea much more in reſpect hereof, that we live in the dayes of the Goſpell, in a farre more glorious light, having theirs and many moe examples to warne us, beene ſo oft in ſuch imminent perils, and as wonderfully delivered formerly as they, or ever any people of the world before.

Oh Lord cauſe that even the very joynts of our bones may be looſed, in thinking wiſely of the ſeveritie of thy vengeance, exerciſed upon them by the bloudy Babylonian, when no other meanes could ſerve to reclaime them, and that in all kinde of miſeries which the heart of man can thinke of, through famine, ſword, nakedneſſe, deſolation by fire, and the like deſtructions, firſt on the Temple, after on all; the ſhame caſt upon thee the Lord of hoſts, thy religion and people by the cruell ſouldiers, and all the curſed enemies of thy Church, when they jeſted at thy Sabbaths, and their land now kept a Sabbath for 70. yeeres together, for polluting thy Sabbaths. And how thoſe that eſcaped with their lives were carried into Captivitie, to be ſlaves to their enemies the inſolent Babylonians, they and their poſteritie, to ſerve them in all kinde of miſerie, inward and outward in their enemies land, becauſe they would not ſerve thee with good hearts in their owne good land, in the abundance of all good things which thou hadſt given them.

And this principally for deſpiſing thy word, miſuſing thy

thy ſervants, chiefly thy moſt faithfull meſſengers, and that ſo it continued untill all that thou hadſt threatned was fully accompliſhed upon them. Oh Lord in mercie open our eyes, and make us all apply this to our ſelves, to awaken us before thou come ſo to apply as unto Iudah; how judgements have begunne at thine owne houſe, and preſſed many of thy deare ſervants our brethren amongſt vs, with their families, downe to the earth, and had cruſhed them even to the loweſt hell, if thou hadſt not beene with them, by thy holy arme ſupporting them; whoſe teares have long runne downe by their cheekes, and they have beene crying for us night and day, when wee have little thought of any of their afflictions.

Make us all to bethinke our ſelves if thou have dealt thus with the greene trees, what thou wilt doe with the drie, where the wicked and ungodly ſhall appeare.

Ah Lord God, rouſe us out of this dead ſecuritie, now that thy judgements are ſo heavily upon our brethren abroad, thy ſervants profeſſing thy name both in *Bohemiah*, the *Palatinate*, and other parts, yea upon that Illuſtrious Prince and Princeſſe, with all their Royall Progenie, principall members of our ſelves: that we ſhould be generally ſo void of feeling of their miſery, feaſting our ſelves, in all jollitie, ſeeking all devices, to put out all brotherly compaſſion, that we may never remember the affliction of *Ioſeph*, nor ſo much as have any commiſeration of our ſelves, in regard of all the evils lying on us, untill the like vengeance doe of a ſudden ſeize upon us all.

Good Father, make us to conceive aright, how thou ſtandeſt mourning over us, as thou didſt over Iudah, expoſtulating with us what thou haſt done to us to grieve and

long and many meanes, which thou hadſt uſed to reclaime them, by the miniſterie of thy faithfull ſervants, mercies, chaſtiſements, wonderfull deliverances, long patience and ſtriving by thy ſpirit, and how their ſinnes were increaſed thereby; when through their owne wickedneſſe, all the meanes became unto them cauſes of their further induration, and even to prepare them for this terrible deſtruction: yea much more in reſpect hereof, that we live in the dayes of the Goſpell, in a farre more glorious light, having theirs and many moe examples to warne us, beene ſo oft in ſuch imminent perils, and as wonderfully delivered formerly as they, or ever any people of the world before.

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Good Father, make us to conceive aright, how thou ſtandeſt mourning over us, as thou didſt over Iudah, expoſtulating with us what thou haſt done to us to grieve and

provoke us, that we, as they, ſhould ſo generally riſe againſt thee, even againſt thy word and ſervants, and all power of true godlineſſe (the lively Image of the Lord Ieſus, and his kingdome) as againſt an enemie, to drive thee utterly from amongſt us; that thine and our enemies may ſerve themſelves on us at their pleaſures when thou art departed from us.

Oh tender Father, manifeſt unto our hearts, how thy moſt faithfull ſervants have beene wont to be affected in ſuch imminent perill of thy wrath, as *Ezekiel*, *Moſes* and *Samuel*; falling upon their faces, and ſo ſtepping up into the breaches, ſtill to keepe out thy vengeance. Yea, make us all that feare thy name, like as they were wont in ſuch perplexities, ſo to uſe all holy meanes, as thou giveſt us occaſions and opportunities, to prevent and appeaſe thy wrath, and to ſave thy people each within our callings, both by mourning and crying unto thee day and night for them, and alſo, warning, admoniſhing and exciting each other to turne from our evill way by unfained repentance, as *Lot* did his brethren. And this firſt by ſetting before their faces our ſinnes and rebellions contrary to our covenant with thee, and againſt all thy kindneſſes to us, to provoke thee to execute whatſoever thou haſt threatned, and ſo all thy terrible denuntiations, unleſſe we ſpeedily turne unto thee. And ſecondly, by directing how each may helpe to pacifie thy Majeſtie, by humbling our ſoules crying mightily as in ſack-cloth and aſhes; ſearching, confeſſing, caſting away all our abominations and ſinnes wherewith wee have angred thee. Thirdly, in ſhewing how we may keepe thy favour, by a continued repentance and watchfulneſſe, by taking away all occaſions of back-ſliding, and eſtabliſhing all meanes of preſerving of grace for ever. And fourthly, comforting and con-

confirming all thy poore ſervants againſt whatſoever ſhall come to paſſe, when they have performed all theſe duties and the like ſo farre as they can, either thereby to helpe to ſave the whole bodie and obtaine mercie for all, or at leaſt-wiſe to ſave their owne ſoules.

Ah good Lord, yet more throughly to awaken us, make us to know that the ſinnes of a people may come to be ſo hainous, as that thou wilt not be any longer pacified and ſtayed at the private prayers of a few, though of thy deareſt ſervants, as at this Captivitie of Iudah, and many other times thou haſt given dreadfull experience, when thou threatnedſt they ſhould not deliver either ſonne or daughter, but even their owne ſoules; when as yet thou haſt manifeſted thy mercie ſo oft, and ſo many waies, what thou wouldſt doe, at a generall humiliation, and haſt to that end ever at ſuch times ſo called and even provoked thy people ſo to meet thee in faſting, weeping and mourning, when they have beene unworthy to be beloved or heard; and haſt bidden them to gather them, before the execution of the decree came forth, that ſo our hearts may be ſpeedily ſet thereunto. *Ezek.* 14. *Zeph.* 2. 1, 2.

Make us to underſtand when that time is, that thou oh Lord wilt not otherwiſe heare nor forbeare any longer at the private prayers of a few of thine owne people, though as deare as *Ieremie* and *Ezekiel* were. To wit, when ſinne is at the height, and full ripe, that it cries to thee to thruſt in thy ſickle, to cut off the cluſters of the Grapes and throw them into the wine-preſſe, whereof thou Lord haſt here given us three evident ſignes. Firſt, when the Land is full of bloud, or bloudie ſinnes, chiefly of oppreſſion and unmercifulneſſe, and when neither bloud of bodies nor ſoules is regarded, no not of the deareſt ſervants of the Lord. Secondly, when it is full of perverſeneſſe or

declining, that whatſoever the Lord doth by his ſervants, or by any other meanes, the people are ſtill worſe and worſe; falling away more and more; when word, judgements and mercies prevaile no longer, to ſoften, but rather more to harden them to perdition. Thirdly, when men ſhal grow to this height of Atheiſme, not to acknowledge God any longer as they had beene wont, neither in any of his judgements, mercies, or the moſt powerfull miniſterie of his ſervants: but in more jollitie than ever formerly to paſſe over all the tokens of his diſpleaſure, as if it were not he, but ſome chance or fortune, for that then he cannot but riſe to ſhew himſelfe a God, to cleare his juſtice, to ſhew his mightie power and terrible wrath, in being avenged for all the contempt caſt upon him, and for the bloud of his ſervants, of their ſoules or bodies, which is ſo precious in his ſight.

Oh moſt gratious God and tender father, yet vouchſafe us this one favour, to ſee plainly now at length, how farre theſe evident tokens of thy imminent vengeance have ſeazed upon us, and in what ſtate we preſently doe ſtand in regard of them, unleſſe wee ſpeedily take away theſe ſo loud crying ſinnes, and all of us crie mightily to our God, that he may be pacified and ſtay from his fierce wrath.

Finally (good Lord) make us all to know for certaine, and now to take ſpeciall warning from thy glorious Majeſtie, that the true obedience of thy ſervants can only bring them boldneſſe, both in this world whatſoever come to paſſe, and alſo to appeare before thy Tribunall, whenſoever thou ſhalt call for them, though never ſo ſuddenly, and at the great day, when they can ſay in the uprightneſſe of their hearts, Lord I have done as thou haſt commanded me; I have endevoured unfainedly with

all my heart, ſoule and ſtrength, according to that meaſure of grace which thou haſt vouchſafed me, to cleanſe and keepe my ſelfe free, from every of the ſinnes of this evill age, and to be holy as thou art holy. I have laboured to doe all that ever I have beene able, to maintaine thine honour, to appeaſe thy wrath, and pacifie thy Majeſtie towards my ſelfe and all thy people, to turne away the vengeance from the whole Land, and every ſoule, yea ſo much as I have beene able to ſave the whole Land, and every ſoule in it, and to make it even as Canaan for ever. Yea to doe all the good to every one that ever I have had opportunity of, principally to the needy and diſtreſſed members of the Lord Ieſus Chriſt, when they have beene hungry to feed them, when they have beene thirſtie to give them drinke, ſicke and in priſon to come unto them, to viſit and comfort their bowels, according to my poore abilitie.

Make us (O good Lord) to underſtand aright that theſe men are they and they alone, that through thy Son Ieſus Chriſt, can truly challenge thy promiſes, notwithſtanding all their infirmities, which ſhall never be imputed to them ſo long as their hearts are ſo upright: That theſe only are they who honour thee and adorne thy Goſpell: and therefore thou haſt ſaid they ſhal be honoured of thee againe. Theſe are they whom thou haſt aſſured of thy favour, thy fatherly protection and providence, ſo farre as ſhall be for thine owne glory, their ſalvation, with the good of thy people. Theſe and theſe alone can have boldneſſe and power in prayer, for themſelves and all the Land, as *Abraham*, *Moſes*, *Samuel*, *Iob* and *Daniel*. Theſe are they in whom thou delighteſt, and to whom thou wilt reveale thy ſecrets. Theſe only have the promiſes of thy power for diſmaying and driving away Satan, yea to ſtop

the mouths of all the wicked, being able to beare their reproach as a crowne on their heads; and ſo can only, as *Iob* and *Samuel*, have boldneſſe in the day of trial to ſtand forth for any good cauſe. Theſe only have the continuall feaſt of a good conſcience, the beginning of thy kingdome here in peace and joy, the aſſurance of the guard of thy heavenly Angels, and all other bleſſings thereunto belonging.

To theſe men only thou holdſt out the crown laid up for all thoſe who have thus walked with thee, even the joyes that never entred into the heart of man to conſider of, and ſo they and they alone having the aſſurance of all thy promiſes for the life preſent and that to come, ſhall be ever able to wait for the appearing of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, lifting up their heads for joy, crying, Come Lord Ieſus.

And contrarily ſtrike this terrour into the heart of each obſtinate ſinner, and make us all to know for certaine that every one remaining impenitently in any one of theſe abominations, which brought this heavie vengeance upon Iudah, or any the like, and eſpecially each perſiſting in the contempt of thy heavenly word, and gratious admonitions, and in the hatred of thy ſervants, ſtands in a moſt dreadful eſtate; for that howſoever he may flatter himſelfe, and albeit at the cries of thy ſervants thou ſhalt once again deliver us, and ever ſave us from an outward ſcourge, yet as he hath by his ſin diſhonoured thee, ſo thou haſt ſaid it and wilt make it good, that he ſhall be made vile and filled with ſhame for evermore. As he hath defaced thy Image hereby, ſo thou wilt deny him as none of thine, but as he hath made himſelfe like Satan, and given him that advantage, ſo thou wilt leave him juſtly to Satans accuſations and claime.

Make each ſuch a one to tremble, for that theſe clouds of ſeparation, which he hath ſo drawne betweene thy

mercy and himſelfe, ſhall for ever hide from him all the comfortable light of thy countenance, that he can never obtaine any aſſurance of thy favour, ſo long as he continues obſtinate: That he provokes thee not only to ſmite him with all kinde of plagues, temporall and eternall, but ſo far as lieth in him to bring a vengeance upon the whole Land. Make him to know undoubtedly, that as he cannot pray in his affliction with any comfort to be heard, ſo thou wilt alſo ſtop thine eares againſt his crie, when hee ſhall houle in his miſerie, like as he would not heare thee to returne from his evill way.

Oh ſpeake in mercy to the ſoule of every ſuch a ſinner, and tell him that howſoever he hath lulled his conſcience aſleepe, yet thou wilt certainly awake it, and call it to an account, either in this life, or ſo ſoone as ever thou takeſt him hence, when it will be too late to cure it, and that then will fall upon him ſuch a ſhame as will make him runne from thee, as *Adam*, to runne into holes, yea to wiſh the mountaines to fall upon him to hide him from thy preſence. Such a ſadneſſe as in *Nabal*, that will cauſe the proudeſt heart in the world to be dead within him of a ſudden. Such a feare as fell on *Belſhazzar*, to make all his bones to ſhiver, and his very knees to knocke together; ſuch a dreadfull deſpaire as to make him cry out with *Cain*, My ſin is greater than can be forgiven, to ſeeke with *Saul*, *Iudas*, and *Achitophel*, to diſpatch himſelfe by any meanes. Yea, make them to know undoubtedly that they ſhall finde then ſuch a hell in their conſciences, as will be unto them the very entrance into the lake, that they ſhalbe immediatly as the raging ſea caſting out their own ſhame; the worme of conſcience beginning to gnaw without hope of releaſe or any eaſe, the fire of hell thus beginning to burne without hope of ever being quenched, unleſſe

they forthwith prevent all this by unfained repentance in this life, which they know not whether it ſhall be continued unto them untill the morning, or that ever hereafter they ſhall have hearts ſo much as once to thinke of it.

Oh Father, make them to know that each ſuch a ſinne, and much more all their ſinnes, barres them for ever out of heaven, and deprives them utterly of al the joyes thereof, and thruſts them into hell, to abide the unſpeakable torment thereof, with Satan and his angels for evermore.

Lord open their eyes to ſee this vengeance, the terrour and certainty of it, thereby to awake them more throughly; both in regard of the dread of thy glorious Majeſtie, againſt whom they have fought, and of thy juſtice, declared ſo evidently in the puniſhment of the Angels, of *Adam*, the old world, *Sodome*, at the giving of the Law upon Mount *Sinai*, in this captivirie and deſtruction of thine owne people of *Iudah*, and many other times, and to be revealed moſt fearefully when thou (oh Chriſt) ſhalt come with thouſand thouſands of thy glorious Angels (to take an account of every one) in flaming fire, rendring vengeance to all who have not knowne thee, or have been diſobedient to thy heavenly Goſpell. And alſo for that they have increaſed their ſinnes ſo fearefully, committing them through ingratitude and abuſe of thy mercies, ſo richly beſtowed on them; contrary to the many convictions and checkes of their owne conſciences, yea contrary to their high calling to be Chriſtians, and againſt their ſolemne covenant at their Baptiſme, againſt their vowes ſo oft renewed with thee; ſo ſtrong meanes whereby thou oh Lord haſt ſtriven with them to reclaime them; ſo many holy motions and purpoſes wrought in them by thy bleſſed Spirit, with ſo many threats and examples of thy judgements.

And

And finally, for that they have ſo oft committed the ſame ſinnes as with a high hand after their ſeeming repentance and pardon obtained from thee.

Oh make them all to know for certaine, that there can be no eſcaping from their particular account, but every one, from him that ſits upon the Throne to the begger on the dunghill, muſt heare it ſaid unto him at that dreadfull day; Come give an account of thy ſtewardſhip; give an account for thy charge, for my glory, for all the ſoules and talents committed unto thee.

That to every one that hath beene a Magiſtrate, or in place of a Magiſtrate, it ſhall be ſaid to this effect; Thou whom I ſet in mine owne place to execute my judgements; haſt thou promoted my pure Religion and all true godlineſſe with all thy power, defacing the contrary, and diſcountenancing all ungodlineſſe to the uttermoſt extent of thy authoritie; like as my ſervants, *David*, *Iehoſophat*, *Hezekiah*, *Ioſiah* and *Nehemiah* did? Haſt thou procured each way the good of my people which I have committed unto thee as a tender nurſing father, repreſſing all the wicked? Haſt thou beene carefull ſo farre as hath any way lien in thy power, that all holy meanes might be uſed for the ſaving of every ſoule, and all hinderances thereof removed; and haſt thou to theſe ends beene in thy place a man of courage, fearing me, dealing truly, hating covetouſneſſe, no accepter of perſons? Come render up thine account.

Oh perſwade all our Miniſters, by what title ſoever they be called, that it muſt be ſaid to each, Come give an account of thy Miniſtery. Haſt thou waited for my call, and entred lawfully by mee, and by the holy meanes that I have appointed? Or haſt thou thruſt in thy ſelfe to runne before I ſent thee? Haſt thou in the calling and charge com-

committed to thee, applied thy gifts as might be moſt to my honour, and the good of my people, watching over every ſoule faithfully, by teaching, admoniſhing, exhorting publikely and privatly, day and night? Haſt thou gone before them in all holy enſample, in converſation and in ſufferings, both in thy ſelfe and family, afraid of giving the leaſt offence, whereby thou mighteſt have hindred the ſalvation of any one, or cauſed my Goſpell to be evill ſpoken of? Haſt thou framed thy ſelfe to all in all things in thine owne power, the more eaſily to winne all? Or haſt thou done cleane contrary? Come give up thine account.

So perſwade all them (good Lord) whoſoever they be that thou haſt ſet in any eminencie, and graced with more excellent gifts, whether outward or inward, that at that day it ſhall be ſaid unto them to this effect: Thou whom I have preferred and graced with more excellent endowments and gifts than thy brethren, hath not thine heart beene puffed vp thereby, as though thou hadſt not received them from me? Haſt thou beene more humbled by them, as having more to be accountable for, giving me all the glory of them? Haſt thou imployed them carefully as the talents committed to thee to that end, as might be moſt to my glory, and the benefit of my people, as did my ſervant *Iob?* Or haſt thou uſed thy learning, wit, credit, and whatſoever elſe I gave thee, to oppoſe mee rather? Come give up thine account.

Finally, (oh gratious Father) perſwade every one of thy people, that as thou wilt take this ſtrict account for their particular callings, ſo likewiſe for their generall. Whether they have done in all things as thou haſt commanded them, whether they have unfainedly endevoured to walke with thee, as *Enoch* in all thy Commandements and ordinances, to keepe thy watch and the narrow way of life,

thereby

thereby to honor thee and adorne thy heavenly Gospel to their salvation? Or contrarily, whether rejecting thy blessed Commandements, they have not walked after the lusts of their owne hearts, and so gone the broad way of all the world, to thy dishonour, causing thy heavenly Gospell to be blasphemed to their perdition?

Perswade their hearts, that every soule, chiefly each living under the sound of thy Gospell, must give up this dreadfull account.

And therefore (oh blessed Father) let us all intreat thee in the name and mediation of thy beloved Sonne, that wee may now be warned from thy heavenly Majestie to prepare our selves in time, each to give up a happie account.

And as we intreat thee for our selves, so we entirely beseech thee chiefly for all in high place, to whom thou hast in a more speciall manner committed thy glory and religion, with thy Church and people for the safe preservation of them. That all they may with boldnesse and confidence be ever readie to give up a blessed account, for themselves and all committed unto them, with every soule under their dominion, that they may be able with holy *Paul*, to appeale to the conscience of all, that they are cleere from the bloud of every one; that they have omitted nothing which lay in their power, for the preventing of evils towards them, or procuring all blessings and happinesse unto them, and that to this end they have done in all things as thou hast commanded.

Above all wee bowing the knees of our soules before thee in the name and mediation of Iesus Christ, doe most earnestly desire this favour for our dread Soveraigne, whom thou hast set in thine owne place as supreme Governour over us in the earth, that he should not only doe himselfe,

himselfe, but see all things done by us his subjects as thou hast enjoyned.

That he alwaies, and especially whensoever he shall be to appeare before thee, may be able to say with confidence before thy divine Majestie, thy Saints and Angels, Lord I have done in all things as thou hast commanded me. That to this end in the meane time, as thou the Lord of Hoasts, our most tender Father hast twise alreadie so wonderfully delivered and saved us, as it were by his hand alone, first when thou broughtest him in amongst us in such an admirable peace, to prevent so much effusion of bloud, and so many evils as had beene so long and so generally feared, and then withall to continue unto us thy heavenly Gospell, with our lives and all our blessings beyond all expectation; secondly, when by his hand, as by the sacred instrument, thou pluckedst us out of the fierie furnace, as a brand out of the burning (whereby thou hast againe bound us all, and all our posteritie to him, and to his seed for ever, for our lives, and our Religion the life of our lives, and all our blessings; and hast since made him unto us as holy *Iosiah* our shelter, and even the breath of our nostrils; so thou mayest by him likewise grant to us this third deliverance, far surpassing both the former: That by him as by thy blessed instrument, we may all be brought forthwith to meet thee with intreatie of peace, in fasting, weeping, and mourning, to appease thy wrath, and prevent all our dangers, yea to renew our Covenant solemnly with thy Majestie, both to reforme every abomination whereby we have provoked thee, and henceforth to walke more conscionably according to the tenour of thy heavenly Covenant, which in words wee professe according to our good Lawes, and to see an establishment of the meanes thereof, and of a most holy peace amongst

us, that ſo upon our unfained repentance, thou maiſt confirme thy Covenant of mercy unto us, to be continued to us and our poſteritie for ever. That thus hee may be the happieſt head of the happieſt people that ever lived in all the world next unto the Lord Ieſus Chriſt, and his throne may be eſtabliſhed till thou our Chriſt ſhalt come; and that all wee his loyall ſubjects, yea all the Churches of Chriſt, may ever pray and praiſe thy great name for him and all his royall ſeed for evermore; ſaying, *Praiſe, and Glorie, Power, Dominion, Might and Majeſtie, be unto him that ſits upon the Throne, and unto the Lambe for evermore.* Amen, Amen.

IOHN 11.40.

Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldeſt beleeve, thou ſhouldeſt ſee the glory of God?

PSAL. 116.10.

I beleeved; therefore have I ſpoken.

An

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